Judging Appalachians
By Phil Obermiller & Zach Zimmerman

A Breach
By Marc Harshman

Creating a Culture of Justice
Photos from the Highlander Archives

NOW & THEN

THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

Center for Appalachian Studies and Services East Tennessee State University

Vol. 31 No. 2

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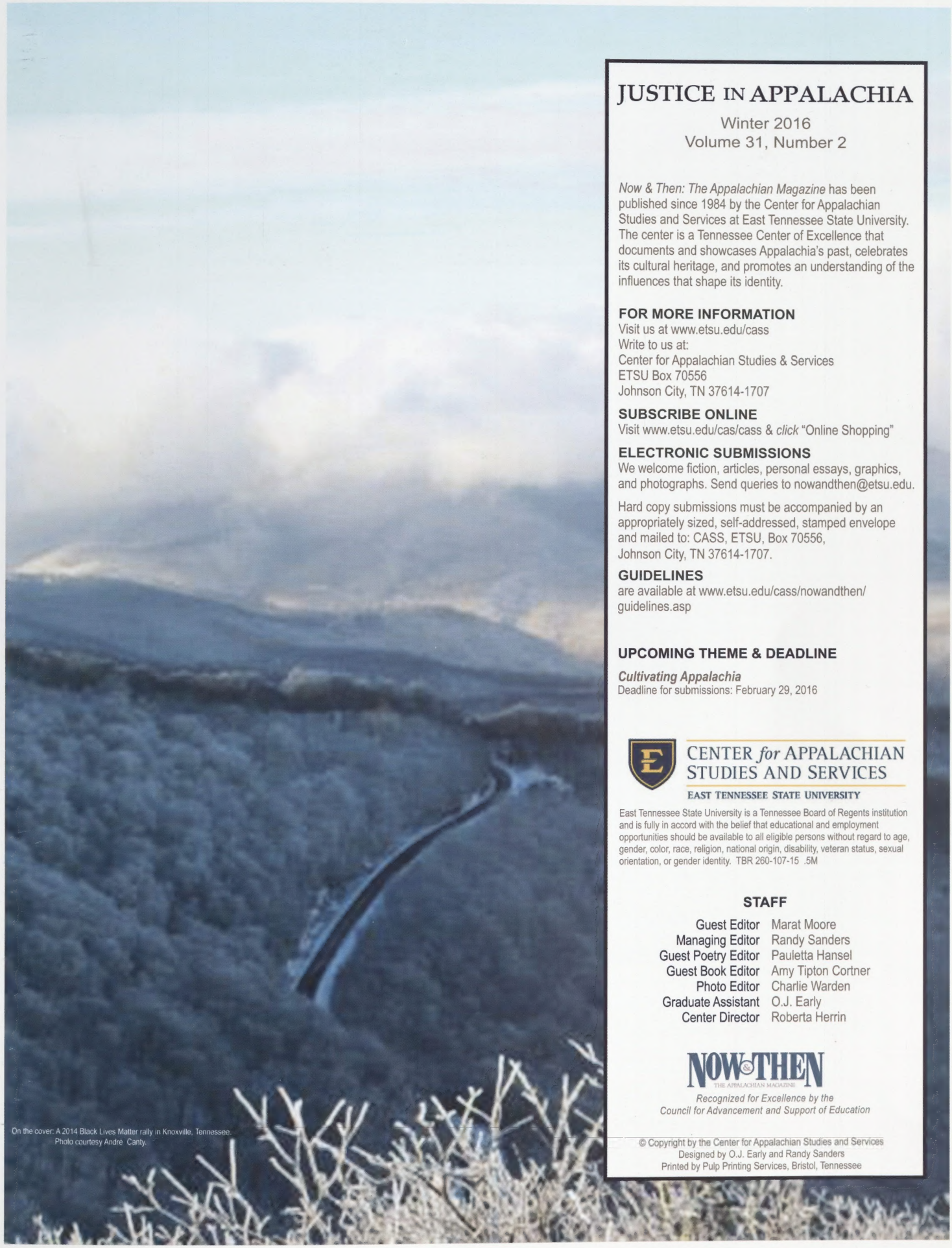
JUSTICE IN APPALACHIA

ARTICLES, PHOTOGRAPHS,
BOOK & MUSIC REVIEWS, POETRY, *and* MORE



On the cover: A 2014 Black Lives Matter rally in Knoxville, Tennessee. Photo courtesy André Canty.

JUSTICE IN APPALACHIA

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NOW & THEN
THE APPALACHIAN MAGAZINE

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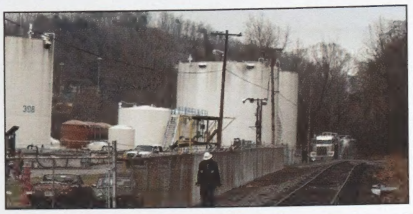
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Who Is Lady Justice?

Roberta Herrin
Director, Center for Appalachian Studies and Services

You see her everywhere—virginal Lady Justice, also known as Scales of Justice and Blind Justice. An amalgam of Roman, Greek, and Egyptian mythologies, she is a lofty symbol with varied interpretations. She typically carries a set of balance scales in one hand and a two-edged sword in the other. The blindfold, which may have appeared in the fifteenth century, led to the phrase "Justice is blind."

This symbol is ubiquitous and nuanced, both lofty and familiar. Lady Justice adorns hundreds of public structures, from Appalachia to the Middle East, wherein the law is applied and justice is meted out: the Marion County Courthouse, in West Virginia; the United States Supreme Court Building in Washington, D. C.; the Tehran Courthouse in Iran. She is also a popular-culture figure, available in statuary for purchase on e-Bay and Amazon. A rock band has appropriated her name, as did Neil Gaiman for his 1995 *Lady Justice* comic book. She even has her own Facebook page, where readers have posted quotations from such diverse notables as Plato, Margaret Thatcher, and Gloria Steinem: "Law and justice are not always the same."

Having made her way into pop culture, this universal symbol is a natural target for parody and satire. She has been portrayed in countless cartoons, one of the most notable being the November 2, 2006, cover of *Rolling Stone*, which depicts an assemblage of corrupted characters emerging from a cracked-open U. S. Capitol dome. Among them is a voluptuous Lady Justice, balance scales held high in her right hand, but her left hand has dropped the sword to lift the blindfold for a wide-eyed peek at the chaos around her, suggesting, perhaps, that even the virginal, innocent Lady Justice is subject to corruption.

Rolling Stone and other satirists, cynics, and cartoonists who distort this icon do us good service. They force us to examine what these symbols mean—female (virgin), balance scales, blindfold, sword. Like most universal symbols, these are commonly taken for granted.

Would a male figure, for example, prompt different subtexts? Just how significant is the gender of an icon? How significant is her virginity? The scales, on first thought, make perfect sense. In the pursuit of justice, evidence is "weighed in the balance." But what is the function of blindness where evidence is concerned? Would justice be better served if Lady Justice could see—with eyes wide open—what tips the balance? Evidence, too, can be corrupted—manufactured. A blind Lady Justice cannot see the what—she can only feel the weight. Does "just" evidence weigh more or less than "corrupt" evidence? And does she ever use that sword? Does she protect the innocent or punish the guilty? How does she know the difference if she is blind? Or does the sword imply—sadly—that decisions about law and justice are partnered with conflict, if not outright battle?

Gloria Steinem was correct that law and justice are not the same. What is legal may not be just, and what passes for justice in one century may be unjust—and illegal—in another. Still, Lady Justice endures as an ideal—a belief that "justice for all" can be realized. Can it? Of course not. Lady Justice may be innocent, impartial, objective, and blind to prejudice, but we are human. It is our blindfold that slips; we wield the sword to ill purpose; we tip the balance scales with greed, bias, and self-interest.

It is good that Lady Justice is blindfolded. Otherwise, she may throw down the scales and sword and flee the hundreds of buildings she adorns, leaving us with bare, unembellished structures—and bereft of hope. ❖

Editor's Notebook

The Arc of Appalachia

Marat Moore

Last May I drove to Mingo County, West Virginia, for the opening of the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum in a rehabbed storefront in Matewan (see museum story on page 40). More than 500 people poured into the small, well-appointed museum to learn about labor struggles in the early twentieth century. They shared their stories with grandchildren. Some shed tears. They were photographed for Facebook with picket signs saying "The Mine Wars Matter," and listened to Elaine Purkey belt out powerful labor ballads. UMWA President Cecil Roberts was on hand. Earlier that week, local dethroned coal king Don Blankenship, on trial for his role in the Upper Big Branch mine disaster, made a brief and unannounced visit. Being there, I felt a sense of irony and the harsh echoes of history and glimmers of hope in that corner of Appalachia.

Thirty years ago in Mingo County, I experienced my first mine war—the A. T. Massey strike. After working underground two miles south of Matewan, I left the mountains to work for the UMWA in Washington, D.C., and was sent back to work the strike. While working with miners' wives and children, I photographed scenes of intimidation, such as the mine guards shown above, and an armored personnel carrier spiked with surveillance equipment parked by a tiny post office on Route 49. These militaristic tactics were the work of a brash, young—and local—Massey executive, Don Blankenship. When UMWA miners suffered a bitter defeat, Blankenship rose in the company and began a long seige of mountaintop removal (MTR) mining. This triggered another "mine war" by local activists and environmentalists who joined forces to try to end MTR.

As coal dies a hard, fast death, justice work turns to economic transition and encompasses a wide range of other issues, as detailed in the book, *Transforming Places: Lessons from Appalachia* by Steven L. Fisher and Barbara Ellen Smith.

The content of this issue reflects the sometimes overlapping facets of justice. Authors describe murder trials and their murky outcomes; the West Virginia water disaster; fracking in Ohio; the emergence of LGBTQ and Melungeon identities; the role of poetry, humor, and satire in justice work; intergenerational solidarity; the Black Lives Matter and Moral Monday movements; food justice in Appalachia and India; and images of cultural organizing from the archives of the Highlander Research and Education Center.

We also welcome guest editors for book reviews and poetry: Amy Tipton Cortner and Pauletta Hansel, respectively. You'll notice a slightly different look in this issue, thanks to designer O.J. Early. As guest editor, my goal was to extend the geographic reach and provide a diversity of content, tone, and points of view. My only regret is lacking the space to publish more of the fifty-plus submissions we received.

This issue is dedicated to Helen Lewis, who more than anyone else embodies social justice in Appalachia, and who has helped so many activists and organizations along the way. We mourn the loss and honor the contributions of two gifted and generous men. Robert J. "Jack" Higgs—scholar, thinker, humorist, writer, mentor, and one of the early proponents of Appalachian studies programs—touched many lives in the region, including mine. Guy Carawan of Highlander used his musical gifts to organize and, with his wife and partner Candie, helped build movements for civil rights, labor rights, and cultural diversity. I also honor the contributions of younger activists and scholars who have emerged to move this work forward and am happy that some appear in this issue.

The moral arc of Appalachia is long—together we work to continue bending it toward justice.❖

A Prayer for State Legislators

Jane Sasser

Today we would like to pray for mercy,
for kindness and grace in the hearts
of legislators, who feel the need
to fix the ills of the state by writing
new rules, who know so well
how the public schools should run,
because forty years ago they went there,
and their own children, well, it's true
they went to private school, but
that's because the public ones
just aren't doing the job, as proven
by this stack of tests that they haven't,
technically, read, but they've heard
how society is going to pot and
it's all because teachers want tenure
when they only work six hours a day
for nine months, and surely
if schools were run more like businesses,
if they could be sure that nothing
is taught that wouldn't make the grade
in a Dickens novel, not that they
have technically, read one, oh,
sweet Jesus, we supplicate,
if you can find them,
please bless their hearts.

Jane Sasser has published poems in many publications, including *The Sun*, *North American Review*, and others. She has two poetry chapbooks, *Recollecting the Snow*, which was published in March 2008 by March Street Press, and *Itinerant*, 2009, from Finishing Line. She is a teacher at Oak Ridge High School.

The Execution of Martin Moore

Anne Chesky Smith

Martin Moore, center, is flanked by members of the Buncombe County sheriff's department and New York City detectives brought in to speed the investigation. Photo courtesy Swannanoa County Museum.

Helen Clevenger had never seen the American South. A native New Yorker, the eighteen-year-old blonde honor student had grown up on Staten Island, was valedictorian at her high school, and won a coveted $5,200 scholarship for her second year at New York University (NYU). It was a rare honor for a female student in 1936. Those who knew her agreed that Helen had a shining intelligence and a bright future. Called "demurely attractive," she was quiet but keenly interested in life. So when her uncle, William L. Clevenger, offered a tour of North Carolina cities, she pleaded with her parents until they agreed to the midsummer sojourn.

So she set off with her Uncle Billy, a stocky, fifty-four-year-old professor at North Carolina State College in Raleigh and an expert on the dairy industry. Departing from Raleigh on July 6, the pair made stops in Greensboro, Greenville, Lexington, Lenoir, Cedar Grove, Boone, Blowing Rock, Linville Falls, Spruce Pine, and Marion. They arrived in Asheville on the evening of July 10.

Her uncle had booked rooms for them at the grand Battery Park Hotel, built by E. W. Grove, where famous guests included John D. Rockefeller and George Vanderbilt, who had first viewed the land for his Biltmore Estate from its windows. Helen and her uncle stayed for two nights in rooms on the third floor before driving west to tour Newfound, Topton, Murphy, and Franklin. On Tuesday, July 14, they came back to the Battery Park and were handed keys to rooms on the second floor. On Wednesday, July 15, they drove to Marshall to attend a farmers' meeting and returned to the hotel around 10:30 p.m.

After their full day Helen bid goodnight to her uncle as she exited the elevator on the second floor and headed to Room 224. Thunder cracked and rain beat against her window. She changed into green-striped silk pajamas and unwound by writing at her desk about her travels. But just before 1:00 a.m. her door opened and a man stepped into her room. She screamed but the storm muffled her cries. He fired one shot, piercing her breast. As she fell, screaming, her knees folded under her crumpled body. Her blood pooled on the floor behind her. The intruder pulled the trigger a second time, but the bullet jammed in the chamber. Rushing at her, he raised the butt of his gun to silence her screams and hit her repeatedly, slashing her face. Finally, she fell silent as she bled to death on the floor.

The murderer stepped around Helen's crumpled body to the bedside lamp that provided the only light in the room. Removing the shade, he unscrewed the bulb and laid it on an armchair with bloodstained fingers. With the room dark, he moved quickly to the door, not disturbing the girl's pocketbook or wristwatch. He cracked open the door and peered out from the shadows. Hotel guest E. B. Pittman stood in a doorway across the hall, his robed form

silhouetted by the light from his room. Pittman asked the man, "I wonder what that noise was?" The murderer remained silent. Pittman continued, "It sounds like someone was in pain. I wonder where it could be?" Standing in darkness and obscured by the door, the murderer said, "That is what I was wondering myself." Hearing no more disturbances, Pittman returned to his room. The murderer slipped out the door, closing it behind him. He took the stairs to the lobby, ran across the main floor and hid behind a desk in the hotel manager's office. Moments later he ran from the office to the hotel's porch, vaulted over the wet banister, and sprinted into the night.

The next morning at 8:30 a.m., Uncle Billy knocked on Helen's door so they could go down to breakfast. No answer. He continued knocking and called her name. Growing anxious, he tried the doorknob and pushed it open, but the door only opened partway. Helen's bloody body was blocking the entrance. He stared, then ran to flag down a hotel handyman, saying, "Oh it is awful! It is awful! Come see what they've done to her!" The hotel manager rushed to the scene and asked William to wait in his room while the manager called the house physician, who pronounced Helen dead. Sheriff Laurence Brown was not notified for nearly an hour and a half. He found Helen's diary, the bloody light bulb, and the shell of a .32 caliber bullet, but no gun.

Brown and his deputies quickly tracked down witnesses. E.B. Pittman could not provide a physical description of the man he spoke to in the dark doorway, but two other witnesses had a clearer view of the man who had raced through the lobby. Bell boy Durham Jones and taxi driver Casey Jones described a white man between 5'8" and 6' tall and weighing around 160 pounds.

The violent murder of a pretty college co-ed in a famous tourist hotel generated national and international headlines for weeks. The public wanted answers. But the investigation stalled and the clues led nowhere. The bloody fingerprints were smudged, the bullet could not be traced, and Helen's diary revealed no plans to meet anyone in her room. The sheriff, facing an election in a few months, vowed that he would solve the case within a week. He arrested William Clevenger and five others—including a renowned concert violinist who had told an acquaintance that he had a date with a girl at the hotel the night of the murder—but released all of them without charge.

Despite two witnesses who got a clear view of a white suspect, the sheriff refocused the investigation on the hotel's African American employees.

With no new leads, the sheriff returned to the witnesses. After learning nothing new from Durham Jones or Casey Jones, he again questioned E. B. Pittman. Later, two sheriff's deputies who had worked the case recounted the re-questioning of Pittman in an article in the magazine *Official Detective Stories* published in mid-October. They recalled that the sheriff pressed Pittman to recall the exact words he heard from the man in Helen's doorway. Pittman said the man might have said, "It's what I'm wondering, too," rather than "That is what I am wondering myself." The Sheriff told his deputies that those words narrowed their field of suspects from nearly eighty to twenty-six. The story reported, "The killer's identity revolved around one little word— 'it's'." That was the remark of a Negro—not a white man! That was the one of the peculiarities of the Southern Negro's speech, the use of 'it' where a white would ordinarily use 'that.'" The *Asheville Citizen* earlier had reported a similar story rephrasing "I'm wondering" to "I'se wondering."

Despite two witnesses who got a clear view of a white suspect, the sheriff refocused the investigation on the hotel's African American employees but could not tie anyone to the crime. With the media frenzy continuing, two detectives from New York City were called in on August 8 to aid the investigation. Soon a hotel pantry boy told them that a hall boy named Martin Moore, who had already been questioned and released, owned a handgun. Moore, twenty-two, was 6'3" and lanky—quite different from the witnesses' descriptions of the suspect—but the detectives rushed to the home nearby where Moore lived with his mother. Yanking him out of bed, they ordered Moore to show them his weapon. Moore pulled the gun from a beam under his house. Bloodstains and blond hairs were on the weapon, and on the butt of the gun a small protruding piece of steel matched the crescent-shaped stab wounds on Helen's face. Later tests linked the shell found in Helen's room to the .32 caliber pistol. Moore insisted that the gun had been borrowed by a bellboy and returned to him the day after the murder, according to later news accounts.

The interrogation began. Moore later testified that police officers kept him awake without food or water, and that he was beaten with a rubber hose by "a fat man from New York" who told him that if he "didn't own up to [the murder], he'd whip him to death." Hours later Moore signed a confession stating that he entered Helen Clevenger's room looking for money and shot her when she began to scream. Moore was asked to reenact the escape, and the sheriff asked Moore very specific questions. Moore most often replied, "Yes, sir." When Moore's reply did not fit with

the evidence, the sheriff rephrased the question. Moore later testified that he was fed answers to fit the facts of the crime.

Martin Moore had no history of violent behavior. After moving with his family to Asheville from Spartanburg County in South Carolina, he had left school in sixth grade to clean houses to help make money for his family. An Asheville physician who examined Moore described him as being "of low intelligence." Other reports called him "slightly retarded" and lacking "the mentality to have done a crime like that." He had worked full-time at the Battery Park Hotel for three years prior to the murder.

The state appointed two white lawyers to defend Moore, who entered a plea of not guilty. Jury selection was influenced by the Scottsboro trial in Alabama the year before, where defense attorneys had raised a constitutional objection to having no black jurors considered. In Moore's trial, "a few Negroes" were considered as jurors, but the twelve final jurors randomly selected were all white. Moore's attorneys produced three witnesses with alibis for Moore, saying that he was with them at a party on the night of the murder. His attorneys also attempted to block the confession on the grounds that Moore had confessed under duress, under promises of leniency, and before his official arrest.

The use of violence and threats by law enforcement officials to obtain confessions was a widespread and common practice in many parts of the United States, according to a 1931 report published by the Wickersham Commission on Law Observance and Enforcement. This report excluded the Southeast, but the region had numerous documented cases. In *Brown v. Mississippi*, for example, three black men confessed to the murder of a white farmer after police beatings. They were convicted. An appeal went to US Supreme Court, which overturned the verdict and ruled that coerced confessions could not be used as evidence in court. The high court ruled in February 1936, just five months before Helen Clevenger was murdered.

The judge in the Martin Moore case, however, allowed Moore's coerced confession to stand. The murder trial lasted only four days, and the jury returned a guilty verdict in less than an hour. The NAACP appealed to the North Carolina Supreme Court, but the court declined to hear the appeal because it had "not been properly perfected." The court did, however, postpone Moore's October 2 execution date by two months." Moore would die not by electrocution but by a new and more "humane" method of execution—asphyxiation by a lethal mix of gas, which North Carolina had begun using earlier that year.

The execution was scheduled for December 11, 1936. Moore again repudiated his confession and told the warden that the state was "going to kill an innocent man." He was taken to the new gas chamber installed in Central Prison in Raleigh, a small white room. He was strapped into a high-backed wooden chair and the airtight door was sealed shut. Minutes later the state's three executioners each turned a key to send sodium cyanide into a bath of sulfuric acid placed beneath the chair. Death row inmates bound for the gas chamber were told to take several deep breaths to speed loss of consciousness, but convulsions were common. It took more than twelve minutes for Martin Moore to die.

The intense media interest in the Clevenger case died with Moore. For many in Asheville's African-American community, however, the injustice of the case lingered for years. Booker T. Sherrill, an African American employed at the Battery Park Hotel at the time of the murder, but not on duty, stated in an oral history interview nearly sixty years later that the "bad racial feelings" stirred up by the case in Asheville lasted from eight to ten years.

"That was a trying time around here. . . . People seemed to think the gun had been planted and Martin Moore was just a scapegoat," he said. "Some people think [the manager's son] had something to do with it." Media coverage and primary documents make no mention of the manager's thirty-seven-year-old son. At least one secondary account of the murder, however, claims that the son had been working at the hotel for the summer, had disappeared the night of the murder, and was never heard from again.

Sherrill noted that Helen's room—No. 224—was permanently blocked from the hotel registration list. He said in his oral history interview that expressing public outrage over the execution of Martin Moore was not an option for many African Americans in Asheville in the years after Moore's death.

"At the time I was very low key and I kept my thoughts to myself," he said, especially his belief that Moore did not have the mentality to commit the crime. "You can't afford to express your thoughts on a situation like that—not and work and do well." ❖

Anne Chesky Smith is a doctoral student in the Integrative Conservation and Anthropology program at the University of Georgia in Athens. A native of Asheville, N.C., she received her M.A. in Appalachian Studies from Appalachian State University in 2010.

Reconciling Ground

Music and LGBTQ Activism

Sam Gleaves

Sam Gleaves. Photo by Susi Lawson.

This June I attended a singing at the Big Cowan Old Regular Baptist Church on Sturgill Branch in Letcher County, Kentucky. The singing was one of many field trips offered during the Cowan Creek Mountain Music School, a wonderful community-led program where generations meet to exchange traditional music. A brother and sister, related by blood as well as by denomination, were leading an old long-form hymn, singing, "I am going home to glory in the good old-fashioned way." Between the punctuated "lining out," the singers took their time, each word deliberate and heavy with memory.

Those of us gathered there made a varied bunch: college professors, a few lifelong residents of Cowan Creek, church elders, surely a few atheists, hippies from California, and many in between. I was comfortable in the surroundings—the church reminded me very much of the one my grandmother's family has attended for generations. I was uneasy, though, because the front of my T-shirt read "I Am a Down Home Diva" above a silhouette of Dolly Parton. The definition of "Down Home Diva" is printed on the back, explaining that I'm a country queer, a Fabulachian. The shirt refers to a humor column that my friend Ethan Hamblin and I wrote in the Berea College student newspaper titled "Dispatches from the Down Home Divas." Still I was moved to tears by the beauty of "In the Good Old-Fashioned Way." As I always have been, I was drawn to the sound before I understood the words.

"I wrote the song because I continue to question what Appalachian masculinity really is."

In the eighth grade I was coming to understand that I was undeniably gay and loved music. Soon I came out to my friends, who were already well aware, and one day while standing at my locker, one of my male classmates asked me flat-out if I was gay. Flustered, I snapped, "That's none of your business!" and unknowingly came out to my entire class of peers. I was never confronted again in my public school experience.

When I entered high school, I tried to figure out the guitar on my own for a year or so. Seeing that the instrument rarely left my lap, my mother suggested that I try some

guitar lessons with a teacher in Rural Retreat, Virginia, the community where she teaches in the public school system.

I remember vividly the first time I walked into Jim Lloyd's barber shop, sporting a tie-dyed Bob Dylan T-shirt and my guitar with too much flashy inlay. Two young fellows were playing an old-time fiddle and banjo tune, "Forked Deer." Jim sat by them, playing guitar and observing their progress, and welcomed me to join in. I got my guitar out of the case and sat down with them, but even watching Jim's fingers, I could barely keep up. At the end of the tune, Jim smiled and said to me, "Too much strumming. Try this."

That was the lesson, a simple boom-chuck rhythm on the guitar to back up a dance tune. This was the first of many kindnesses afforded to me in the old-time music community. I kept coming back to the barbershop each week for lessons, and soon Jim took me along to fiddlers' conventions, weekly square dances out in Cedar Springs, the recording studio, and anywhere else there was a concert or a picking party. Through the music I made all kinds of friends, connecting across generational lines and among our many homeplaces.

The old-time music community is more diverse and progressive than many would assume, though fundamentalist attitudes do exist that don't allow LGBTQ people to fully express themselves in some circles.

I will never be able to sing certain songs for a few older mentors and family members, or reveal to them that I have a male partner. At times, however, I have been shocked by unexpected acceptance from those same older mentors. Overall I have found that my teachers and peers in the old-time music community treat people as musicians first, seeking commonality in the music rather than reasons to consider a person different.

Continued on page 10

A Mother's Journey

Deanna Bradberry

I grew up in Southwest Virginia. My grandfather used to take my brother, cousins, and me to the mountains whenever he could. We chewed on teaberry leaves, hunted chinquapins, and we swung on a grapevine we called our own. We'd go home to a home-cooked meal fresh from the garden with home-baked bread from our grandmother's kitchen; then we'd sit and help her shuck the beans for the next day's feast. I was raised in a small, Methodist church where kind-hearted grandparents and many uncles, aunts, and cousins on all sides of the family filled every row on Sunday mornings.

I became a single parent to two boys before I turned thirty. I didn't really understand a life where the mom had to work full-time outside the home and provide the sustenance for the family, but I was driven. I was taught by my parents the value of an education, and luckily was still surrounded by my mom and dad and the boys' father and paternal grandparents. I had two of the most special sons a mom could have: Aaron, a kind-hearted soul who became a social worker, and Sam, five years younger.

Sam was always creating—a new costume to wear to school, a new recipe to try before I was awake in the mornings—and projects from his briefcase that he carried to kindergarten while wearing a cape. Our lives all lifted when Sam chose music. Through his songwriting and playing with that bright smile, he has given us the same joy as his brother did through his quiet giving.

I worried over Sam and his sexuality as he grew because, as lovely as our home here is, and as kind as our people are, I knew that there is resistance to change, resistance to realities, and sadly, some misuse and misunderstanding of God's word. I knew that early on I needed to make Sam feel whole in every way in a community in which some may not accept him for who he is.

My nature is not confrontational, so I chose to show Sam he was loved at home, teach him to hold his head up with pride, and most importantly, to keep the lines of communication open in our family. If we couldn't follow him around and be a shield, then we'd be a sounding board and support group for one another. The approach worked. Sam advocates through song. Aaron advocates through his quiet counsel to troubled families. I advocate by raising these boys and through teaching.

I teach in a high school in my home county, and try to teach students to be kind to one another. A sign in my room and a note in my course syllabus says, "Be who you are" and "Come into this room with respect for all." I want them to understand respect, as I have, for those who they believe are "other." Recently, a former student sent me a note of appreciation: "Thank you for showing your support for kids who were different. You didn't know who you were talking to at the time, but you made me feel safe." She included a picture of herself and her partner.

There are challenges ahead for us in these hills that are going to call for louder voices than mine. I hope that with time, and with the historic national changes in gay rights, more teachers and moms and dads will love their kids for who they are. I will continue my work and both of my boys will go forward in theirs, with Sam carrying a song of hope for gay youth in Appalachia.❖

Sam Gleaves, left, with his brother Aaron and his mother, Deanna Bradberry.
Photo by Susi Lawson.

When I asked Jim why he continued to invest so much effort in teaching kids like me for almost no money, he simply said, "Because I think you need it."

He was certainly right. For me, music has always been a reconciling ground. Ola Belle Reed, the legendary songwriter and banjo player from Lansing, North Carolina, said, "You cannot separate your music from your lifestyle." I write songs just the way I am, trying to follow in the footsteps of my shero-songwriters like Jean Ritchie, Hazel Dickens, and Sue Massek, whose music speaks truth to power with real stories in song.

For the past year I've been working with community music activist Cathy Fink on my first record of original songs, titled *Ain't We Brothers*. The title song is built from the story of Sam Williams, a West Virginia coal miner who stood against discrimination and abuse from his fellow workers because he is openly gay.

I wrote the song because I continue to question what Appalachian masculinity really is. My father is one example: a tender-hearted, thoughtful, well-educated person, and also a blue-collar man who has worked for Norfolk-Southern Railway for decades. Sam Williams is another hard-working, thoughtful man, but his fellow miners insulted him and tried to make him feel as though he was less of a man for loving a man. Sam's brave decision to make a home with his partner Burley in the West Virginia mountains and to speak out about his experience changed my life. Such decisions allow queer Appalachian people to understand ourselves better, to claim a history of our existence. The song is my testament to those who choose to live honestly in their own culture, loving their whole selves and speaking out despite the risk of exile: Below is the chorus:

First things first, I'm a blue collar man
With scars on my knuckles, dust on my hands.
You probably wouldn't have ever known
That I've got a man waiting on me at home.
To tell you the truth, I don't want to fight,
I just want to say one thing outright to you
Ain't we flesh and blood all through,
And ain't we brothers too?

In my songwriting and performing, I strive to be honest about who I am. My ultimate hope is that this openness creates a space for other artists of diverse identities to come forward. The songs on my record tell about what I have seen and felt here in central Appalachia: two Virginia boys who fell in love, generations of working-class struggle, discrimination faced with resilience and love, the unfading imprint of my people and home. I am grateful to be one of the Fabulachians who didn't have to endure rejection to be who I am. I have many teachers to thank along my way, but I could never have come out singing without my daddy, who gave me a guitar made of spruce from Whitetop Mountain, and my mom, who gave me the freedom to become who I am.❖

Sam Gleaves is a folk singer and songwriter who preserves mountain culture in performance and song. A graduate of Berea College, he works as an AmericorpsVISTA member at the Loyal Jones Appalachian Center at Berea. His first collection of original songs, *Ain't We Brothers*, was released in November 2015.

Deanna Bradberry is a high-school and community-college English teacher. She was active in the Appalachian Studies program at Radford University, where she earned her BA and MA in English.

Judging Appalachians

Phillip J. Obermiller and J. Zachary Zimmerman

Larry Gibson is arrested at a 2007 protest against mountaintop removal mining at Governor Joe Manchin's office in Charleston, West Virginia. Photo by Dave Cooper.

In the fall of 1999, the Indiana Public Defender's office needed an expert witness for a capital case. In presenting their defense argument, the attorneys for Norman Timberlake told the court that he was born in poverty on a remote Appalachian "knob" and described the defendant's extended family there as beset with alcoholism, known for "sexual intermingling," and engaged in petty crime. They were working hard to create a last-ditch argument that could mitigate Timberlake's sentence—perhaps even save the man's life. Regrettably, they were also invoking just about every available Appalachian stereotype to explain their client's murderous behavior. The attorneys decided that they needed an authority on Appalachian culture (as they perceived it) to testify on their client's behalf, so they began telephoning Appalachian "experts." To our knowledge, they didn't find anybody willing to engage in such negative labeling.

Appealing to negative images of Appalachians to mitigate judicial penalties is nothing new. In 1959 a court-appointed defense attorney in Ashtabula, Ohio, described his Appalachian client as "the product of a marriage of first cousins in Kentucky's squalid coal fields" and successfully prevented a death sentence by using consanguinity as the basis for a plea of insanity. Clichés about mountain people abound in American popular culture; apparently, the halls of justice echo with them as well. Using this so-called "Dogpatch defense" on behalf of Appalachians seeks to mitigate culpability by offering a stereotypical explanation for a defendant's behavior.

In the latter half of the twentieth century, evolving American jurisprudence brought forth several new defense strategies to mitigate or excuse criminal culpability. The spousal abuse defense allows defendants to present physical abuse as a mitigating circumstance in the murder of a marriage partner. Some war veterans have used the delayed stress defense (post-traumatic stress disorder) to ameliorate criminal charges. Likewise, the theory of a "cultural defense" emerged in the legal literature in

the mid-1980s as another means of mounting an effective defense in a criminal case. Attorney Taryn Goldstein notes that this defense could "negate or mitigate criminal responsibility where acts are committed under a reasonable, good-faith belief in their propriety, based on the actor's cultural heritage or tradition." This theory pertains to criminal proceedings and has mainly been applied in cases involving immigrants such as Asians, Hispanics, and defendants from the Middle East. Because this defense strategy so often involves immigrants, however, it is difficult for courts to see its relevance to defendants who have been born and raised in the United States. For this reason the cultural defense may, at first glance, seem inappropriate for Appalachians.

The fundamental point of the cultural defense, however, is that awareness or ignorance of the law is irrelevant. The defendant simply acts under a set of norms that differ from the mainstream. When moral imperatives weigh more strongly in the defendant's actions than the legal statutes that contravene them, the cultural defense is appropriate. This defense, which flips negative stereotyping on its head by invoking local values and beliefs, is useful for other than capital cases.

Many Appalachian people, for example, face criminal charges stemming from direct actions taken by individuals and members of community-based organizations. Such charges also provide the opportunity for presenting a cultural defense. For instance, attorneys could argue that Appalachians' respect for the land is relevant when charges result from protecting their homeplaces from environmental degradation (dumping toxic waste), industrial activity (mountaintop removal), or government ventures (new highways, hydroelectric projects). Or that Appalachians' loyalty to kinfolk warrants some illegal behaviors associated with coalfield strikes or mining health and safety issues. In these and similar cases, instead of employing negative stereotypes in criminal proceedings against Appalachians, defense attorneys can deploy a more positive defense strategy based on an understanding of local norms and principles.

When moral imperatives weigh more strongly in the defendant's actions than the legal statutes that contravene them, the cultural defense is appropriate.

This type of defense operates at many points throughout the judicial process. It can present extenuating circumstances that lower the severity of initial charges, cause charges to be dropped or lowered during plea bargaining, affect the sentencing phase of a trial, or be used in appeals proceedings. According to the editors of the *Harvard Law Review*, "Cultural factors, in this context, serve not to exculpate the defendant, but to mitigate her punishment."

Despite its growing recognition among members of the criminal bar, the cultural defense is by no means a get-out-of-jail-free card. In most cases, the defendant knowingly and intentionally commits the act for which he or she is being tried. The facts of the case are rarely in dispute, and culpability under the law is fairly obvious. "Uncle" Dan Combs' pointing a rifle at a bulldozer operator about to strip mine his family's land is an action that allows little room for misinterpretation. In cases such as this, where an Appalachian defense is appropriate, establishing guilt may be less of an issue than determining the extent of the punishment.

The use of the cultural defense, however, sets up the possibility of a legal backlash; identifying oneself as an Appalachian may cause judges and juries to allow negative stereotypes to influence their decisions. The *Harvard Law Review* editors note: "[The] absence of procedural safeguards and guidelines leads to inconsistency in the treatment of cultural factors from case to case. The combination of covertness and unfettered discretion is a particularly troubling method for dealing with cultural factors because this combination has historically presented an opportunity for officials to exercise prejudice against cultural minorities." Thus defense attorneys who invoke the cultural defense on behalf of an individual Appalachian defendant may successfully lessen their client's sentence, but do so at the risk of reinforcing stereotypes harmful to the client's larger group culture.

Moreover, the cultural defense is not always appropriate. For instance, some oppose judicial consideration of any cultural norms that result in violence toward women and children. In this case the cultural defense would clearly not apply in instances of rape, incest, domestic violence, or spousal abuse in the region because there is nothing inherently "Appalachian" about these crimes. Others may see any leniency in sentencing gained from a cultural defense as betraying their principles because it diminishes the political impact of their actions.

Apart from the limitations of the cultural defense or objections to it, other aspects should be considered when using it on behalf of Appalachians. The severity of the crime and

the likelihood of its being repeated are universal concerns of the courts. As to severity, many direct actions in Appalachia (pickets, marches, boycotts, sit-ins, blockades, protests, slowdowns) are victimless actions or involve crimes against property. To the extent that the direct actions are successful in obtaining a satisfactory resolution of the issue at hand, the probability of repeat offenses by the same individuals is diminished.

Of greater concern is the ability to identify the group and assess its self-containment and size. When a culture group is too large, too widely dispersed, or too vaguely characterized (such as fifth-generation Irish Americans), the courts will not entertain a cultural defense. The federal definition of the Appalachian region is of little use here because it is a regional planning device, not a cultural delineation. Moreover, the federally defined region currently encompasses some twenty-five million people spread across 420 counties in thirteen states. Here, an acceptable Appalachian cultural defense would have to emphasize the specific values of the local community that provide the social context for the defendant's beliefs and actions. As the *Harvard Law Review* editors state, "Courts might, for example, measure the degree of the defendant's assimilation into the mainstream culture. The less assimilated the accused, the more compelling are the justice-based arguments that it is unfair to punish her for not complying with the law." In the Appalachian case, a county or a group of counties may form the appropriate unit of analysis, thereby fulfilling the court's need for a relatively small, well-delineated, and readily designated group.

In 2004, for instance, the Center for Capital Assistance in San Francisco was looking for an expert witness in a capital case, providing a useful example of how "localizing" an Appalachian defense might work. The prosecution maintained that Eric Rudolph's disappearance in the mountains near Andrews, North Carolina, for over five years—after killing two people and injuring some 120 others with his home-made bombs—was a key indicator of his guilt. Instead of appealing to generalized cultural characteristics of Appalachians, the defense team focused on the remote section of North Carolina where the defendant had spent his formative years. They enlisted the expert testimony of a Western Carolina University history professor who stated that the defendant's "retreat to the wilderness in the face of being sought by federal law enforcement is consistent with the cultural values, principles and lifestyles of some of those in the region." The defense contended that the defendant's subculture included "strong community ties coupled with an independent spirit; living off the land; preservation of individual privacy and freedom; and a persistent mistrust and suspicion of government." (The case was resolved before the judge could rule on the admissibility of this argument.)

Ultimately there is no standard formula for a successful cultural defense in Appalachia. Trait lists of "Appalachian cultural characteristics," whether positive or negative, are usually cartoonish and to be avoided. The only way to mount a compelling Appalachian defense is on a case-by-case and place-by-place basis.

Similar to many minorities, Appalachians often receive adverse treatment in the criminal justice system because of derogatory stereotypes. Even when aggressively advocating the rights of Appalachian defendants, some attorneys paradoxically resort to negative stereotypes readily accepted by the courts. In the face of this history, an Appalachian defense based on local norms and standards for behavior would be a welcome alternative, one offering a fair and effective means of protecting minority rights within a judicial system that values appropriate sentencing. For Appalachians, it presents an additional and more affirmative way of obtaining justice. ❖

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An Unlikely People Assemble

How Moral Monday Came to the Mountains

Amy Tipton Cortner

Thousands of people crowded into Asheville's Pack Square for a 2014 Moral Monday rally. Photo by David Cortner.

Most of us have a few basic rules, usually unarticulated, which order the almanacs of our lives. Don't try to reason with a drunk. Carry turtles across the road—at arm's length. Put aspirin in the Christmas tree water to keep the needles green. One of the most important rules, for me, is to shy away from anything with the word "moral" in it. "Moral" in my world has come to mean the exact opposite of what it meant for Jesus and the Buddha and Gandhi and Henry David Thoreau, to shortlist the sattvas. "Moral" means that despite having been baptized twice (immersed and sprinkled), anointed with chrism, burned by the Refiner's Fire, and released into the light of the Thousand-Petaled Lotus, I am about to be told I'm going to hell.

So, early in the spring of 2013, when I started seeing posts on my Facebook news feed about something called the Moral Monday movement, I was cautious. Actually I was a turtle sitting on the shoulder of the road with my neck pulled in, glaring at the traffic, trying to figure out what was going to run me down this time. Well, I certainly was surprised. Led by the Reverend Doctor William Barber II, president of the North Carolina NAACP and the "strong nuclear force" of the Forward Together movement, Moral Mondays were being organized to voice the concerns of those North Carolinians who had just undergone a political laryngoscopy thanks to the hatchet of GOP gerrymandering.*

Those broad-based concerns are reflected in the growth of Forward Together, which now encompasses 170 member organizations. C. Richard Gibson, writing for huffingtonpost.com, explains that its agenda focuses on "high-quality public education, living wages, health care for all, racial justice, voting rights, affordable higher education, fairness for state contracting, affordable housing, criminal justice reform, environmental justice, collective bargaining and worker safety, immigrants' rights, a new civil rights act, and bringing the troops home."

Now this was a different kind of moral, the kind of moral that had calendared the seasons of my life from the

time I began to observe—and think. Throughout the days that followed, as I watched online, thousands of protesters descended on Raleigh while the General Assembly, law by retrograde law, wrenched what had been a fairly progressive state back to the days when only white, Christian men had all the power—and the money.

Then I started getting posts about the Mountain People's Assembly, a non-partisan coalition of regional groups working together under the aegis of the Forward Together movement. The Assembly was going to host a Mountain Moral Monday in Asheville. Moral Monday—Forward Together was coming to the mountains. I was dubious. In my experience, my people have no problem moving forward—but only by their own volition and at their own pace. Moving forward in groups (other than church groups) was another matter. All my life I had been admonished to avoid joining "groups." Groups were formed by outsiders with suspect motives. Groups caused trouble. Groups gave off a skunk-strong scent of the Devil Communism. Groups could get you sent to hell.

But on the day of the rally, mountain people grouped in astonishing numbers—10,000 at the final count!—in a most unlikely affiliation.

How could this be? That question remained unanswered until my husband David and I finally got to Asheville for the second Mountain Moral Monday. There we discovered all races, all genders, all ages, all denominations (and lack thereof), and all political creeds sweating and singing and smiling, relieved to find that they weren't alone, watching wistfully through TV and computer screens and wishing there was something they could do to save their versions of the Shire from the oliphaunts of Sauron—aka the General Assembly.

But this wasn't an anti-GOP rally. Reverend Barber has described the super majority in the General Assembly: "I call them extremists, I don't call them Republicans. I know good Republicans, and them people aren't it."

This was a pro-people rally.

And the people who astonished me most belonged to the mountain middle class. I wasn't surprised by the college professors, the old hippies, the carefully unkempt hipsters, the people who moved-here-from-someplace-else. I expected to see them. I did not expect to see the descendants of Whigs-Turned-Radical-Republicans, whose families, like mine, for generations intoned the mantra, "I'd vote for a Democrat if they ever ran a good one."

All my life I had been admonished to avoid joining "groups." Groups were formed by outsiders with suspect motives. Groups caused trouble. Groups gave off a skunk-strong scent of the Devil Communism.

Not having been forced to learn to fight against King Coal, the mountain middle class in western North Carolina had no history of protest on a grand scale. In fact, they historically viewed organizing—that most sulphurous form of group-joining—as an anathema. (Don't believe me? A regional hardware chain provides its employees with a list of procedures to follow in case of emergencies and natural disasters. At the top of the list are instructions for what to do if a union organizer shows up.) These people had been raised as I had been raised—to keep their heads down and not cause trouble. This was exactly the kind of movement my parents had prayed I would run from, not toward. Their dread that I would "write about the family" was counterbalanced by their dread that I would "get involved" in some public cause that "would make the family look bad."

Yet there they were, middle-class people from Watauga, Haywood, Jackson, and Transylvania counties, all with NAACP chapters less than a year old. An area that is 95.7 percent white and 1.8 percent black had, in its desperation, turned to the venerable civil rights organization—once among the most feared and distrusted of all groups—and had been welcomed.

The most succinct answer to my question "How could this happen?" was provided by Wanda Woodby, president of the Yancey/Mitchell chapter, who was given the honor of introducing Reverend Barber. (Stop this instant and go see Wanda and Reverend Barber in action: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JN9aWsW9E-4). Wanda, whose family has lived in Mitchell County for about as long as Mitchell County has existed, pointed out that the chapter was not made up of "troublemakers" coming from afar. Instead, it represented "the new face of Yancey and Mitchell," where people traditionally look out for each other even as they "mind their own business." To describe what had roused them to take action, what had moved them to join a group, she turned to an old mountain adage. The "extremists in Raleigh," Wanda said, had "poked the bear." And when "the bear is poked, it fights back."

Wanda was among the 10,000 who had rallied in Asheville the year be-

* The "strong nuclear force" binds protons together in the core of atoms despite the powerful electromagnetic repulsion between similarly charged particles. Something like the strong nuclear force must bind volunteers together, and that something is the Reverend Barber.

fore. Inspired, she and a dozen others organized their own Moral Monday immediately afterwards in Burnsville. On that August evening in 2013, somewhere between 200 and 500 people showed up—out of a population of 1700 in the town. At that point, Wanda and the others decided to establish what would become the Yancey/Mitchell chapter of the NAACP. Despite initial caution on the part of the NAACP ("They didn't know what they might be getting into," Wanda said.), the chapter got off to a roaring start. In one of the least-organized, whitest counties in western North Carolina, 146 people immediately leapt to join the NAACP.

At the July 2015 meeting of the chapter, Wanda got to the heart of the question I had been asking for over two years. Maybe "the extremists in Raleigh" had "poked the bear." Maybe it was time to stop "minding your own business" while depending on others to "get involved." But why this movement? Why this—group?

"We started," she told me, "because issues that were primarily white-people issues finally hit us. All these years, the NAACP had been looking out for African Americans and [their] issues, and now it had come home to us. That's how we got started.

"But as we have got into this, we have started seeing that there is a fusion of all these issues together," she said. "And I think without exception it's not African-American issues. We are Moral Monday people. We are NAACP. What affects one affects all. We're in for the long haul. This is not like other things I've been involved in, where I know there's an ending and the energy is going to run out. The NAACP will be here when I'm gone."

What the Moral Monday movement shows us is that we have a home in the bigger world.

So in the end, what did it take to bring mountain people to the NAACP, to join the long haul for justice? The same thing that dragged them from Watauga to Kings Mountain in 1780. The same thing that made thousands of them—including my troop of Tiptons—join the Union army in 1863. The same thing that sent them to unfathomable horror in unimaginable lands after 1941. The faraway war had come home.

For the first time in this part of Appalachia, people realized that this war isn't ours alone. Education. Racism. Health care. Political disenfranchisement. Discrimination and hatred and fear of the other. These aren't battles we can leave for someone else to fight. And they aren't battles we can fight once and then retreat back into our don't-cause-trouble-for-the-family shells. What the Moral Monday movement shows us is that we have a home in the bigger world. We've heard about this bigger world all our lives, and until now, we thought we could live as armchair citizens, benefiting from the toils of troublemakers while exerting no effort of our own, letting strangers do our work for us. But once the Moral Monday movement finds us, we understand that it is up to us to open the flood gates, so we can join others as instruments to "let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." We move forward together.

And nobody is telling us we're going to hell. Even if we do the unthinkable—and join a group. ❖

Amy Tipton Cortner recently retired from Caldwell Community College in Hudson, North Carolina, where she was an English instructor. The author of two chapbooks, a novel, and numerous essays, she has long been involved in Appalachian Studies.

My Father Home from Prison

Clyde Kessler

Fought through an autumn olive thicket.
Heard a few thrushes chattering there.
Heard a jaybird squawking at a sharpie
that swiveled through like a ghost-bird
torn from a cloud. Heard lumber trucks
braking on Route 42 at the bridge
across Kimberling Creek. A loudspeaker
shouted something from White Gate Prison,
not far away.

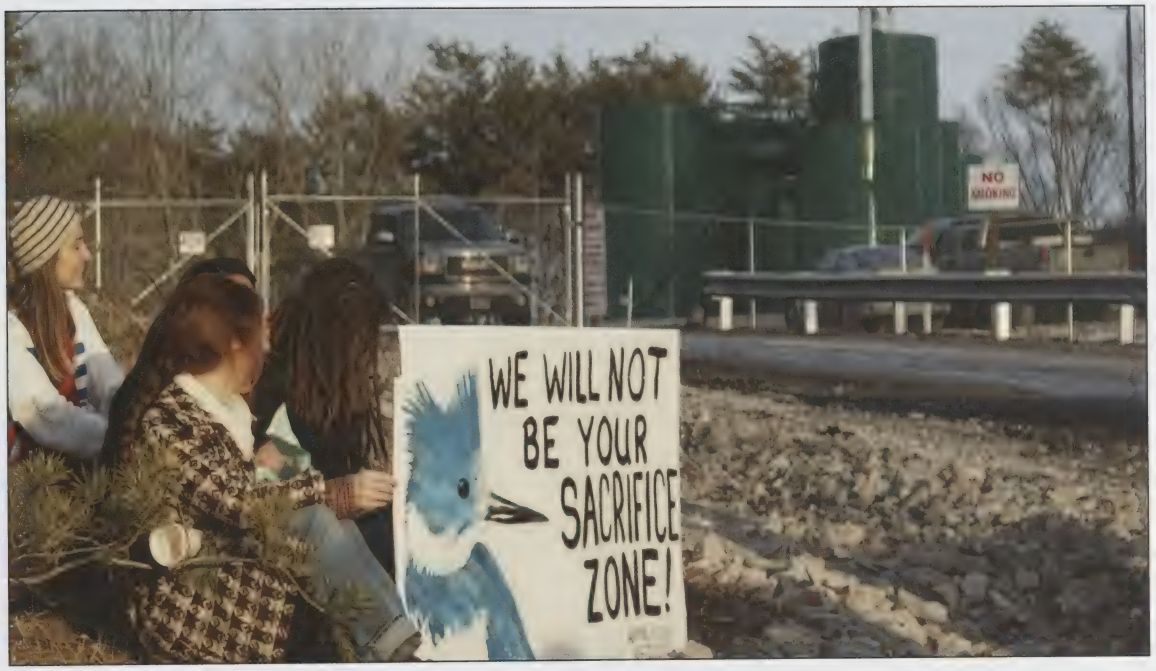
I heard it like a rough shadow
of the cell they kept my father in years back.
Heard that man's voice crackle into dead pines.
Imagined an owl twisting through the fields
after it flew above the guards at midnight.
Sketched its thin screeching on my nerves.
Forgot its cry when I slogged through wing-stem
and multiflora rose. My own sixty-two summers
whickered through fog and trees and weeds,
but I saw waspers and bugs sipping tree sap
and couldn't remember what year I heard it all
rattly and harsh in a prisoner's mind.

Clyde Kessler works in the library at Virginia Tech. He is a founding member of Blue Ridge Discovery Center, an environmental education organization in southwestern Virginia and western North Carolina.

Lessons from Fracking

The Ohio Experience

Sandra Sleight-Brennan



More than 100 people protested the permitting of a K&H Partners injection well in Athens County, Ohio, in February 2014. Photo by Sandra Sleight-Brennan.

It was in 2012, Barry Booth remembered, that he and his wife Mary eagerly signed up to lease their property for oil and gas drilling, along with many of their neighbors in Carroll County, Ohio. Having lived through the experience for four years, Booth now says he made a mistake. A year ago, he walked into a room in his house and was knocked to his knees by the smell of gas and other fumes that came from a gas compressor station over a mile and a half away. "Other people smelled it in their homes," he said. "More than two hundred people called 911." But no one fixed the problem. The couple is still living with the noxious fumes.

The Booths and their neighbors did not worry at first about the impact of drilling on their property. In Pennsylvania and Ohio, oil and gas drilling has been going on since the late 1800s. Folks were used to oil and gas drilling. After all, the first oil well in the United States was in Titusville, Pennsylvania—and Rockefeller's Standard Oil Company had its headquarters in Cleveland. For 100 years, some farms had been heated by free gas that came from their share of having a leased well on their property. It didn't seem to hurt the farms. The oil well and the brine tank for the salt water that came up with the oil or gas only took up a small part of a pasture. How could fracking be any different? In Carroll County, Ohio—the first county in the state to experience the impact of this new type of resource extraction—farm families found out quickly.

Hydraulic fracturing has been used for years in the West to drill deep into shale formations to extract natural gas. Fracking moved to Pennsylvania in 2005 with large production wells to exploit the extensive Marcellus and Utica shale formations. In 2011, "landsmen"—representatives from the gas companies—arrived in Carroll County. Companies first offered signing bonuses of $5 per acre—then $1,500, then $5,000. People lined up to lease their farmland and sign for the bonuses plus 16 percent royalties on gross oil production. That was pretty good money for hilly farmland!

When Barry and Mary Booth leased their land, "It was like we were the Beverly Hillbillies—everyone here was," Barry said. They had no idea what they had signed up for. Oil and gas companies bought or leased an estimated 95 percent of Carroll County sub-surface rights. Landowners who held out faced the threat of losing their oil and gas rights under a state that permits companies to "pool" their

oil and gas resources with other neighboring landowners who agreed to lease. Since then, fracking has spread quickly in Carroll County. In 2015, the county had 43 percent of the state's producing wells, according to the FracTracker Alliance.

Carroll County is part of Ohio's Appalachian region and lies in the east central part of the state. In 2014, the county's population was 28,187. That number included 350 full-time farmers, making farming the top source of revenue, followed by tourism. The county's poverty rate was 15.5 percent. With only one major town, Carrolton (population 3,241), Carroll County has few main roads and no four-lane highways. But new structures are appearing in the landscape now—big well pads and drilling equipment, quite different from the small rigs of the past.

High-volume horizontal hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," is a drilling method that has a huge impact on land and people. In fracking, vertical and horizontal drills bore deep into shale deposits, which are then fractured with pressurized fluids. It's conventional drilling on steroids. Consider the land required for a single well pad—three to eight acres. From one pad, approximately ten wells are drilled; each well requires between 1.2 and 3.5 million gallons of water. And don't assume you can heat your house with this type of gas. Pipelines and compressors must move the gas to a processing plant.

In 2011, the governor of Ohio and many other state officials claimed that this high-impact drilling would have an even bigger impact on the state's economy, creating 200,000 jobs and generating half a billion dollars in new revenue. But by 2014, the industry had created fewer than 3,000 shale-related jobs. That's less than one-tenth of one percent of jobs in the state. And many of the paltry number of jobs went to out-of-state workers, since drilling companies often bring in their own crews. In the fracking industry in Ohio, that means that lower-paid support jobs—truck driving, cleaning, restaurant work, doing laundry, grocery delivery, and rental services—go to local workers.

Few jobs of any kind in the industry—field jobs or support jobs—come with health insurance. And oil- and gas-field jobs are dangerous. In Pennsylvania, a hospital in Lycoming County lost $750,000 in uncompensated care for workers involved in drilling Marcellus shale. Out-of-state workers also need housing. In Carrollton, the hotel and campground had no vacancies for two years. Rents tripled to $1,200 for a three-bedroom apartment; many locals were priced out and had to move.

New affordable housing is not being built, as communities hesitate to invest for a boom that might go bust. Statistics indicate that the boom may be more temporary than originally thought. A Policy Matters Ohio study reveals that after an initial spike in the flow of oil or gas, production from fracked wells drops 40 percent or more after the first year, another 35 percent after the second year, and another 30 percent the third year.

Carroll County residents are seeing the end of the drilling boom as well drillers move on to Harrison and other Ohio counties. As production declines, landowners receive smaller royalty checks, maybe 25 percent of what they received eighteen months ago.

But there is another deadly aspect to fracking—injection wells, where millions of gallons of toxic wastewater are pumped into the earth. By August 2015, Ohio had become the dumping ground for wastewater produced in Pennsylvania (6,245 drilled wells) and West Virginia (2,120 wells). Fracking wastewater—a cocktail of toxic fluids, many known to be carcinogenic—can be put in injection wells near underground water aquifers.

Since 2005, oil and gas companies have not complied with regulations in the national Safe Drinking Water Act as a result of the "Halliburton Loophole" in the federal Energy Policy Act, and Ohio does not test the contents of drilling waste. This poisonous waste is called "brine," but let's be clear—it is not what Grandma used for pickles! It's a proprietary blend of toxic chemicals, heavy metals, corrosive salts, and radioactive material that companies don't want disclosed. And there is a lot of it. An *Akron Beacon Journal* review of data shows that nearly a million pounds of liquid chemical additives was used in a single fracking well in Carroll County. Drilling opponents are shocked by the tonnage totals. "I'm absolutely dumbfounded. . . . That's extremely troubling," said Teresa Mills, who is active in No-Frack Ohio, a coalition of seventy Ohio grassroots groups.

All this chemical waste has to go somewhere, and more is coming into Ohio. The problem of disposal worsened after Pennsylvania moved to strengthen its fracking waste rules in 2010. But in addition to disposal hazards, the toxic sludge is dangerous to transport. Truckers often don't know what they are hauling, which poses serious risks for first responders. On June 28, 2014, a fire broke out at a frack well at a Halliburton site in Monroe County. The chemical blaze torched twenty trucks, and dozens of truck tires exploded with a deafing boom. Firefighters didn't know what chemicals were in the fire, and company employees evicted them from the site. Seventy thousand fish died from the compounds released in the fire. These accidents involving chemical waste are in addition to other dangers such as well blow-outs—which in one case forced 400 families to evacuate —and fatalities at drill sites.

Despite the risk to public safety, the state exempted the oil and gas industry from federal chemical reporting requirements under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-

Know Act. This exemption allows the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) to interrupt direct reporting of hazardous chemicals to state and local emergency planning agencies and to local firefighters.

With laws that favor industry, not citizens, fracking companies are even less accountable to the public than the coal industry. The Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act provides for public hearings, and public comments must be considered before permits are granted; citizens also can accompany an inspector to a mine site. But oil and gas regulations discourage public input. The ODNR will not grant a public hearing—even if elected county officials request it. And the federal Environmental Protection Agency has no jurisdiction over toxic wastewater or the use of water for fracking.

In the face of government inaction, Ohioans are fighting back. In 2012, Jamie Frederick spoke at a rally at the Ohio State House. Her Mahoning County home had been surrounded by large gas wells, but physicians assured her that her well water was safe. Later she discovered the water was laced with fracking chemicals including barium, strontium, and toluene. As a result, she said, she lost her gall bladder: "If there had been solar panels and wind turbines surrounding my home instead of gas wells, I never would have gotten sick," she told the crowd. These days, she said, her mouth bleeds and it's difficult to talk: "I am losing my voice more all the time." Still, she spoke up.

Grassroots letter-writing campaigns and lobbying have yielded little on the state level. Locally, officials have been more responsive than state officials, but local leaders have little influence on state and national drilling decisions. In the Ohio counties being fracked or subject to injection-well waste, groups have formed to educate and organize citizens with public meetings, rallies, and protests. In some counties, commissioners have pressed the state for a moratorium on injection-well permits.

Direct action has generated headlines. In 2012, a woman chained herself to two concrete barrels in Athens County to block incoming trucks at an injection well. In Washington County, a man scaled a thirty-foot pole on a brine truck to achieve the same goal. In 2014, eight Athens County residents were arrested for blocking an injection well.

County groups have collaborated on actions and lobbied together at the statehouse. Activist Teresa Mills has worked for years on issues related to industrial pollution. "Although industry has a lot of money to throw around to our elected officials, we have one thing they don't—people," Mills says. "We need to take some of these officials out of office with our votes."

Groups also are pursuing legal action. The federal Enviromental Protection Agency has been asked to reconsider the primacy it gave the ODNR over oil and gas regulations. The local Athens County Fracking Action Network is challenging the permit process for injection wells and the state's natural resources department for failure to comply with requests for records.

Back in Carroll County, Barry Booth wonders about the damage already done. "What about the water, the soil, the deforestation, the air?" he says with a sigh. "I hate to see what will happen. In forty or fifty years, will fracking be like asbestos? Will its effects kill you? I think they will."

June 2014 fire at the Statoil well pad at a Halliburton site in Monroe County. Photo courtesy of FracTracker.

But Teresa Mills remains determined.

"In Ohio and across the nation, citizens are playing catch-up to the drilling industry," she says. "Industry has had their plan for fracking our communities for years, but only came into Carroll County in 2011. But we are catching up and we will fight the good fight, wherever we need to—in the streets or in the courtroom."❖

Sandra Sleight-Brennan is a writer and award-winning producer of radio and video documentaries. Before retirement she taught media studies at Ohio University. She lives in Athens, Ohio.

How Workers Learned Their Rights: Western Carolina Railway Camp, 1905

Joyce Compton Brown

In a burial plot
designated for slaves
and descendants
in the woods
on Honeycutt Mountain
below the railroad tracks
built by Italian immigrants
shipped to New York
down to the Carolina Mountains
to blast and dig the tracks
to carry coal
out of Virginia
to the coast,
five unarmed men lie buried,
lost to their descendants.

They mustered strength
to demand payment
for their work.

Locals were deputized,
the mining camp was stormed,
bodies were buried.
Everyone went back to work.

Joyce Compton Brown has published in numerous journals, and her chapbook *Bequest* appeared in 2015. She taught at Gardner-Webb University in Boiling Springs, North Carolina, and lives in Iredell County, North Carolina.

Ridin' Around Listenin' to Wiley and Wilgus

The Creative Resilience of Poet-Activist Jim Webb

Scott Goebel

The day before the Thirtieth Annual Pine Mountain Tacky Lawn Ornament & Pink Flamingo Soiree, I was at Wiley's Last Resort atop Pine Mountain near Whitesburg, Kentucky, rummaging through the tool shed with Jim Webb. We needed three-inch deck screws and scanned Mason jars, plastic tubs and paper sacks before finding something close. Webb's pack of German shepherds announced a car pulling in the Barking Lot—so named because the dogs like sleeping there.

Out of the car stepped a young man with glasses, wearing sandals, jeans, a Mountain Justice T-shirt, and a small bag hanging from a cord around his neck. He squinted as he slowly turned, taking in the scene.

"Welcome to the End of the Whirled. Can we help you?" Webb asked as we came up behind him.

The young man spun around, raising a hand to shield his thick glasses from the sun.

"I can't believe I'm finally here. I just had to see it," the kid said. "Everybody's been telling me about this place and the guy who lives here."

"Well," Webb said, "I'm the guy who lives here. I'm Jim Webb and this is Sparky." He gestured to me.

"My name's Wilgus," the young man said, offering his eager hand.

We both caught the kid's name. We glanced at each other, but said nothing.

After connections were made, Webb offered Wilgus a twenty-minute Jeep ride around his ninety-acre private campground. Webb tossed me the keys. I'd chauffeured enough to know the kid was in for a crash course in Webb's humor and resilience. I also knew the trip would take us an hour, if we were lucky.

Webb—aka "Wiley Quixote"—has named every place at the Resort, often using puns or wordplay. Before getting in his red Jeep, Webb pointed out The Ruins of Civilization—a stone foundation which is all that's left from a 1995 fire that destroyed Webb's home.

"Inside are the Blankenshitters," Webb said. "Our composting toilets, aptly named for a nefarious coal company executive."

With his satirical and biting wit, Webb began changing names to protect the guilty in the late 1970s in a column in the alternative newspaper *The Sandy New Era*, which was launched in Williamson, West Virginia, shortly after the Great Appalachian Flood of 1977. Strip-mining made the floodwaters rise faster and higher. Two years earlier Webb had first learned of the devastation of strip-mining after seeing *In Memory of the Land and People*, by young filmmaker Bob Gates. Webb had been at a fundraiser in Pipestem, West Virginia, when poet-activist Don West insisted everyone screen the new film. "It knocked me out," Webb said, and the film's impact transformed his literary voice.

Writing as Wiley Quixote, he began to target King Coal and corrupt politicians for their assaults on the land and people. Wiley also became the protagonist in his play, *Elmo's Haven*,—in which Governor Jay Rockefeller became "Rocky Pharaoh" and his successor, Governor Arch Moore was "Arch Enema." Wiley later evolved into Webb's radio persona on WMMT-FM at Appalshop in Whitesburg. Webb's voice grew even louder in the 1980s, as the coal industry moved to blast and gut mountains through mountaintop removal—strip-mining on steroids. By targeting the status quo in poems like "Buzzsaws in the Rain," Webb in time became a target himself, but he never quit speaking out.

Beside The Ruins stands a small stage.

"That's the Flood Stage, Wilgus," Webb said. "Elevation, 2,473 feet. It's where we've had concerts for fifteen years."

If Wilgus hangs around, he'll learn the name is a tribute to everyone who helped Williamson and other Tug River communities recover from the 1977 flood. Webb, who taught at the local community college, helped make sandwiches and hauled in water and toilet paper when authorities responded too slowly. He helped organize the Tug Valley Disaster Center, the first of many groups that Webb co-founded or supported—Kentuckians for

Jerry Williamson has called Jim Webb the "most essential human being I'll ever hope to know" and the "symbolic soul" of the mountains

Jim Webb stands by the steps to the "Path to Enlightenment." Photo by Nelson Pilsner.

the Commonwealth, the Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative (SAWC), the Appalachian Studies Association, Appalshop's WMMT-FM, *Appalachian Voices*, and others.

Webb pointed behind us.

"That's Walled-In Pond," he told Wilgus. "The road around it is the Henry David Thoreaufare."

"Far out," Wilgus chuckled. "How long you lived here, Jim?"

"I came back to Pine Mountain in 1984," he said. "I was born in Letcher County, but grew up in Shadyside, Ohio, and Hazard." Webb tossed four pink flamingos into the Jeep.

Wilgus reached into his neck bag and asked permission to record the conversation on his iPhone. Webb agreed.

"Over there's the Eyeful Shower," Webb said."Our campers' bathroom."

He told the kid about the Ancestral Cabin—built by Webb's great-grandparents in 1837 and recently moved to the site.

"The Sister's Trail runs up that holler to the old Pine Mountain Sand and Gravel quarry," Webb said.

Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel, the journal of the Southern Appalachian Writers Cooperative, was co-founded by Webb. He also has had a hand in publishing other seminal regional publications: *Mucked*, *Strokes*, and *RECK*—all of which took on social and environmental justice issues, especially strip-mining.

As we climbed in the Jeep, Webb pointed out two Airstreams—named Margo Ray and Arlene—where two young women had pitched a red tent. Wilgus gave them an admiring look as I bulldogged the Jeep past the pond and onto Flamingo Road. We got out at the Sand Bar & Gorilla, where every vertical surface is covered with beer signs, yard art, and plastic pink flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber plasticus*, as one sign calls them). Uncle Raymond was hanging beer signs between the rafters. We hopped out of the Jeep.

"You find me those screws, Sparky?" Raymond asked.

I tossed him the bag.

"What's the story behind this place?" Wilgus asked.

"The Sand Bar was the bath house of the old Pine Mountain Resort," Webb said.

"This was Letcher County's great swimming hole for a long time. It's Soiree weekend, Wilgus. We'll have 10,000 Christmas lights, live music all night, and 200 swarpers here around the pond."

"Swarpers?" Wilgus said.

"All kinds of people," Webb replied. "Artists, musicians, poets and just plain folks who believe that we can make a better world by embracing the culture of these mountains and the land, and have fun doing it. It's a wonderful thing. I hope you can stay."

"What all goes on?" Wilgus asked.

"Well," Webb said, "It's probably

At the Resort, Webb hosted organizers of the Whippoorwill Festival, which promotes sustainable living in Appalachia. In the background is Black Mountain. Photo by Nelson Pilsner.

best to see for yourself and leave it at that."

Wilgus picked up a copy of Webb's book, *Get in, Jesus,* from a table display. Poet Richard Hague has called the title poem the "most famous poem in Appalachia." Jerry Williamson, the former editor of *Appalachian Journal,* described it as ". . . the great poem of Appalachian loss . . . ." Before the book came out in 2012, the full text of the poem was published on a different surface—on T-shirts in thirteen editions—with iconic art by Robert Gipe.

"I've got some T-shirts, too," Webb told Wilgus. "But we'll come back. Let's get on with the tour."

After grabbing a beer, we piled into the Jeep again, rousing the dogs. Wilgus sat down in the center of the back seat, moving two flamingos from his left to his right side. He noticed cement steps across the road that seemed to climb right into the mountain. The sign read, "Path to Enlightenment."

"Where do those steps go?"

"Just where the sign says," Webb replied.

"Cool!" Wilgus said.

As we drove down into the holler, a sign marked Weegiva Dam—a block wall retaining the pond. The dogs ran past us. Through the trees, Jim pointed out where the first fire happened.

"First fire?" Wilgus said. "Was there more than one?"

"Four. My folks' place burned down first," Webb told him. "I lost everything."

Everything indeed. Because of his poetry and WMMT radio program, by the 1990s, Webb had become a visible agent for change in the coal region. The first fire in 1992, while he was at a SAWC gathering, was deemed arson. The second fire took his aunt's place. The third fire took the old resort's lodge, which Webb was renting at the time. The fourth fire took the Tolly-Ho House, a beautifully restored roadhouse into which Webb had not yet moved. He lost more of his writings with each blaze.

The message of the first fire was clear—stop making trouble. It had that effect on his writing for a short time, but it did not keep him from being heard. After the shock of each loss, he invested more of his efforts with WMMT-FM. In time, his ironic and satiric wit returned to his writings and radio program—stronger, but changed. After the third fire Webb bought the ninety acres and began to develop Wiley's Last Resort, building a community that no fire could destroy.

The Jeep growled as we rose out of the woods to an open flat—Lester's Flat, Junior. A large stage—eventually to be solar-powered—sits on the south end. In the distance, Black Mountain, Kentucky's highest, is being stripped for coal. The view is impressive—and horrible.

"My God," Wilgus said, "I had no idea."

"You can hear the blasting from here," Webb told him. "And the coal trucks rumble day and night."

Black Mountain makes a stark backdrop for artists and activists who use this part of the campground to organize and teach people from outside the region what the coal industry is inflicting upon the land and the people. Nearby is the large Mountain Justice Pavilion, built by Dave Cooper, Mountain Justice activist and founder of the Whippoorwill Festival along with a team of young activists. Webb also has hosted the Supermoon Music Festival, SAWC gatherings, Cowan Creek Music School campers, MARSfest, Mountain Justice Summer, dozens of university and social justice groups, as well as local weddings and picnics.

"What's up on that knob?" Wilgus asked me.

"Elmo's Haven," I said. "The writers' cabin at the End of the Whirled. It's named after Jim's play of the same name."

"That's great," Wilgus said. "I'm a writer, too."

We were forty-five minutes into the twenty-minute trip, so time was too short to explain that the play's title sounded a lot like a John Denver song.

At the end of the flat we passed New York and turned up a ridge called Faith Hill. On our left was Tiger Woods. On our right—the Gump Forest. At the next dip in the road, I pushed in the clutch and stopped. I knew the routine. We paused at the Pawsoleum, the final resting place for Resort dogs. Then Wilgus noticed another sign.

"Hey, there's the The Path to Enlightenment. Does it go to the Sand Bar?"

"It goes where it says," Webb replied.

"Must be something special on that path," Wilgus said.

"If not on the path," Webb said, "somewhere along it."

In the rearview mirror, I saw Wilgus grin.

"Far out!" he said. "What an amazing place."

We wound up the hill and came to the highest point on the mountain, and a sign, Almost Haven. Wilgus looked puzzled.

"This is where we almost built Elmo's Haven," Webb said.

Wilgus caught the pun-on-the-pun right off. We all hooted, rolling down the other side of the mountain, past the Din of Antiquity & Sports Bar—old television box frames, their glass tubes long gone.

The abounding puns and Webb's sense of humor can be traced to his appreciation of Walt Kelly's POGO characters. Always ironic. Often sarcastic. Always requiring his readers to think carefully. Webb has said that humor simply helps him tackle darker issues. Puns have worked well with Webb's wit and in his poetry, attacking greed-heads, as he calls them. His "Pike County: Doo Dee Oomp Wha Wah" is a rollicking, five-page assault on big coal and its minion politicians. That poem and *Get in, Jesus* illustrate the breadth of Webb's work. While they are both humorous, one attacks the worst of us, and the other celebrates the best in us.

Jerry Williamson has called Jim Webb the "most essential human being I'll ever hope to know" and the "symbolic soul" of the mountains. Despite the fires and other setbacks, and repeated attempts to marginalize him—through a lifetime of work, poetry, radio shows, publications, actions, and Wiley's Last Resort—Webb's resilience mirrors that of the region itself. Whatever the personal cost, his defense of the mountains, mountain people, and culture remains steadfast.

Next on the trail was the long-abandoned Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel quarry. Its red, pink, orange, and white sandstone has eroded to a strange landscape—the locals call it Mars. Farther down the road we passed the Powder Room where dynamite was once kept, then the sun-bleached, burned-out foundation of the Tolly-Ho. A short jump onto US 119 and we rolled into Webb's driveway. The dogs had taken a shortcut and were sleeping in the Barking Lot. The trip had taken ninety minutes, which was fine with me. Wilgus thanked us and asked about camping.

The Sand Bar & Gorilla reflects Webb's whimsy and fondness of pink flamingos. Photo by Nelson Pilsner.

"You can camp in 'Arlene'," Jim told him.

"Cool," Wilgus said, "but only if I can pay for it."

Webb nodded. "Donations are always welcome."

"I want to visit Whitesburg. Interview some folks while I'm here," Wilgus said.

He pulled off his thick glasses, rubbed them clean with his shirt. Glasses returned, he squinted at us.

"I'm hoping to meet that radio guy, Wiley Quixote," he said. "I listen to him on the Internet all the time."

The Sand Bar & Gorilla overlooks Walled-In Pond. Photo by Nelson Pilsner.

"Well, it's a blue moon tonight," Webb said with a snort. "With any luck, he'll show up."❖

Scott Goebel is a scholar, writer, and editor. His work has appeared in *Cold Mountain Review*, *Appalachian Journal*, *Wind Magazine*, *Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel* and is forthcoming in *Iron Mountain Review*. He edited Jim Webb's *Get in, Jesus—New and Selected Poems* (Wind 2012). He lives in Campbell County, Kentucky.

Black Lives Matter
The Appalachian Edition

André Canty

Last summer, a group of adults and I met with a group of young boys and asked them to address the most pressing issue in their lives. The first boy, just eleven years old, spoke up in a serious tone. He said that he was afraid of being shot by police because he has seen so many black people gunned down. The only way to avoid that death, he said, was to be the best man he could be—through good behavior and good grades. He had internalized the belief that in order for black people to escape oppression, they have to be the patron saints of the human race—an impossible task.

Growing up in the 1990s in east Knoxville, Tennessee—branded the "bad side" of the city—my eyes and my ears told me two entirely different stories about what it meant to be black in Appalachia. At four years old, I saw a man bloody from a shotgun wound. I saw the toughest men in the neighborhood reduced to children in the face of police brutality. At the time, whether those men actually did anything wrong was of no relevance to me. I internalized that all of those men were bad—otherwise, why were they arrested?

My first male role model was a black police officer, whom I saw as trying to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the community. Even as a child I recognized that some police officers were benevolent, but I also sensed that the law enforcement system—and far too many within it—was often malicious.

Despite what I had seen, every winter with the approach of Black History Month, I was told that all was well, that the world had been saved by godly men and women who had battled the enforcers of Jim Crow segregation with little or no opposition—and that the color of my skin would not deter me from a fruitful life. I also was told that Malcolm X and the Black Panthers were just mean people who weren't significant enough to mention in our school textbooks.

With black and white students going to school together, as the years passed many people in my generation did not view race as a key factor in oppression. My white peers seemed to view racism largely through the lens of history—limited to slavery as presented in textbooks or movies, or racial slurs. After the 1960s and 1970s, many of us, black and white, believed that our mutual love of college football, sweet tea and fried chicken, and drinking out of Mason jars was enough to bring us together across race. But, by the 1990s and 2000s—and especially with the 2008 election of President Obama—it felt like we were living in an era of little racial injustice.

André Canty speaks at a rally held in Knoxville, Tennessee, in November 2014. Photo courtesy of the *Hard Knox Independent*.

Then Trayvon Martin happened.

When Trayvon was gunned down in 2012, he became more than a young man—he became a symbol of what was left unfinished in the struggle for racial justice. My generation had come of age, and we were forming our ideologies and worldviews. I was ten years older than Trayvon but had grown up in the era of baggy pants and cornrowed braids—and I had endured racial profiling. When George Zimmerman was acquitted after shooting Trayvon in the back, three black women started the hashtag "Black Lives Matter," which ignited debate on social media; we began to understand, collectively, that we were not going to let this crime be forgotten.

Then Ferguson happened.

If Travyon's death resulted from the racism of one man, the death of Mike Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, exposed the broader destructive impact of systematic racism. Brown lay dead in the street for four hours; he was killed just before he entered college. A March 2015 report issued by the US Department of Justice concluded that Ferguson police officers routinely violated the constitutional rights of the city's African American residents by applying racial stereotypes in a "pattern or practice of unlawful conduct."

In the days after Brown's shooting, civil unrest in Ferguson was met with curfews, police in riot gear, pepper

spray, rubber bullets, and armored personnel carriers. City officials told protestors to be non-violent and forgive the injustice, but Ferguson residents refused to walk away from the evidence of police brutality. Some detractors said that Martin Luther King, Jr. would have urged the youth in Ferguson to go home, but King himself spoke about the roots of civil unrest: "A riot is the language of the unheard." When the black community of Ferguson rose up, a generation was awakened and began to organize.

Many of us from the Appalachian region went to Ferguson in 2014 for a Weekend of Resistance and witnessed a growing movement. There was a spirit of hope and urgency in the air. The hope of our forebears who faced oppression, struggled, and won was tangible; the urgency of the now—the urgency that Black Lives Matter—was equally palpable. It was like Malcolm and Martin, Ella Baker and Assata Shakur were talking to us.

Through Ferguson and the social media explosion that followed, young people became politically and socially aware. This decentralized movement is not about a single leader, and it is not about marches—as many have claimed—but about grassroots organizing to take power from those who oppress us. Marching manifests righteous anger, but organizing occurs before a march, and there is much work to do afterward.

We saw with more clarity in Ferguson how intersectionality worked—how a multitude of issues flowed into the bigger issue of racism. We saw how black oppression came not only from police brutality but from district attorneys, the court system, and some media sources that portray black culture as a minstrel show or a breeding ground for gang violence. We saw how the school-to-prison pipeline and sexual violence towards women fit together.

We came back from Ferguson with a mission—to start a movement in Appalachia and in our hometowns. We are male, female, straight, LGBTQ, Christian, atheist, Muslim, immigrant, formerly incarcerated, Blood, Crip, in suits, in basketball shorts, in afros, and in tattoos. "Black Lives Matter" is the rallying call of our generation to tell society that justice is blind to the color of human skin. Organizers in Appalachia are working collectively to bring about change in the places we call home.

We came back from Ferguson with a mission—to start a movement in Appalachia and in our hometowns.

In East Tennessee, Black Lives Matter chapters in Knoxville and Johnson City have addressed police brutality, the living wage, for-profit prisons, and the recent burnings of black churches after the Charleston shooting, including Knoxville's College Hills Seventh-Day Adventist in the historically black community of Mechanicsville.

There is also a coalescing of other regional groups around the multifaceted social justice issues represented by Black Lives Matter. In 2014, a group of mostly young people of color, together with some law students and professors, decided to tackle the issue of the school-to-prison pipeline in Knox County through grassroots organizing focused on the power of community voices, especially from affected students. Those efforts led to the formation of a task force made up of teachers, law enforcement, and community leaders to find ways to keep the students in school instead of suspensions and arrests.

The Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tennessee, where I work, has been a force for social justice since its founding in 1932. Through Highlander's Seeds of Fire program, youth are addressing juvenile justice issues. In fact, Highlander has a long history of bringing groups and individuals together strategically to decide how to connect issues and build coalitions; how to build leadership pipelines; and how to infuse art and culture into social justice campaigns.

White supporters in East Tennessee and elsewhere are forming chapters of a national network of groups and individuals called Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ). Through community organizing, mobilizing, and education, SURJ invites white people to join a multi-racial majority for justice.

The Black Lives Matter movement has changed the national conversation. Our isolation is lifting as we find people who share our passion for racial justice. As an Afrilachian, I work to ensure that the movement grows in our region and that we tell our own story.

This movement is here to ensure that an eleven-year-old boy can strive to be the best he can be—because he wants to, not from fear that he will be killed by police. I do not want my children and their children to see what I saw when I was a child. I want them to know that we are a people who cannot be beaten down. A people who will not run or settle. A people who will not take "no" as an answer.

A people who will *be* the answer.

❖

André Canty works on the Development/Communication Team of the Highlander Research and Education Center in New Market, Tennessee. He is active in Black Lives Matter Knoxville and other city groups and is president of 100 Black Men of Greater Knoxville.

Hearts Afire

Building Intergenerational Solidarity

Gabby Gillespie and Kipp Dawson

Kipp Dawson (right) and Gabbie Gillespie work on Dawson's personal archives. Photo courtesy of the authors.

Together Kipp Dawson, seventy, and Gabby Gillespie, twenty-nine, embody six decades of activism. Dawson, a former coal miner and UMWA activist, now works at a middle-school in Pittsburgh. Gillespie is a community organizer who lives in Appalachia, Virginia. Although they are far apart in age and physical location, Kipp and Gabby have forged a deep bond that has honed their visions and nourished their organizing work in Appalachia and beyond.

KIPP DAWSON

Trade unionism flowed into me with mother's milk. My maternal grandparents were Polish Jews, immigrant activists, and socialists. My grandmother's husband was murdered in Erie, Pennsylvania, in 1922 for being all those things, and for opposing the burgeoning Ku Klux Klan. Later my mom became an activist in the 1934 San Francisco general strike and supported the growth of industrial unionism.

As a child I jumped on my parents' bed with my siblings as we chanted verses of "Solidarity Forever" in our apartment in the San Francisco Bay area. Little did I know that this labor anthem would follow me to a mine portal in the Pennsylvania coalfields, which I entered in 1979.

I was quite the outsider at first, bringing with me three decades of activism in the civil rights, anti-war, women's, and socialist movements. I was a Jew, a short woman, and a lesbian. But like most of the women miners in western Pennsylvania, I was an ardent unionist.

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GABBY GILLESPIE

I was born in the Blue Ridge Mountains of southwest Virginia. My people are from southern West Virginia—as far back as I can see in my family tree. I identify as Appalachian. Although I have family members employed in the coal industry, I was not raised with that heritage. Where I was born in the Appalachians, the mountains have been untouched except for residential and commercial development.

When I realized the atrocities of mountaintop removal (MTR) in communities not far from where my roots run deep, I was compelled to get involved in any way I could. The first outlet I found for that work was Mountain Justice, a grassroots group that uses public education and civil disobedience as tactics for abolishing MTR and other forms of extraction, while encouraging a transition to a healthier future for mountain communities.

For more than a decade, I have been involved in various social justice causes and understand now more than I did ten

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DAWSON continued

From 1979 until my layoff at the end of 1992, I was an active member both of the United Mine Workers (UMWA Local 1197, District 5) and the women miners' organization, Coal Employment Project (CEP). In these years, I was a part of powerful and historic work.

I've been buoyed by many good battles, but the most important are the civil rights movement and UMWA solidarity work, often led by women miners. People came together from disparate backgrounds and communities, built organizations that cut across former divisions and animosities, and fought for human dignity, fairness, and justice.

From the start I felt compelled to record this history. I have paper records of the UMWA battles at Massey and Pittston and on other fronts around the coalfields, across the United States and in El Salvador, Britain, Cuba, Australia, and beyond. I have journals and voluminous correspondence with sisters and brothers in those struggles.

People's history helps us pass on the vision of a better world to a new generation.❖

GILLESPIE continued

years ago that many of these causes are connected. I believe deeply in dismantling oppressive systems in our society. While a lot of my passion for activism is rooted in work in coal communities, I have been able to work and build solidarity with communities across the country, especially in the South where people are fighting for justice.

Much of the organizing that I do now focuses on economic diversification in communities in southwest Virginia that have been traditionally dominated by extractive industries. For the past several years I've worked to help build solidarity, while also pursuing local issues, because connecting across issues makes the work that we all do stronger. Whether my day includes helping host an apple-growing celebration in Wise County or traveling to New Orleans to discuss with other font-line organizers how to build a stronger Southern Movement—for me it is all connected. Sometimes we are singing and marching, sometimes we are meeting and writing letters, but we are always fighting. There is a lot of work to do.❖

Collaborating to Preserve the "People's History"

an informal discussion with Gabby and Kipp

Now &Then: **How did you meet each other?**

Gabby: I met Kipp while I was a graduate student at Western Kentucky University. She had put a call out gauging interest in archival materials she had collected over decades, and I responded. I was living in Chicago, and she happened to be in Chicago for a teacher's union gathering. From that first meeting we made a connection that I knew would change my life.

Stepping into Kipp's garage and seeing the archival materials that she collected over decades opened me up to worlds of inspiring knowledge. I had never experienced the power of having this type of history passed down in this way. When she tells me about her experiences, I can see the way things have been built and how power moved on the grassroots level. I feel blessed to have this relationship.

Kipp: For me, Gabby is a better-than-I-could-have-wished-for answer to a quest that has become critical for me. I turned seventy this summer. I am the oldest of my siblings, and neither parent lived to be this old. I am in good health, but I take seriously the need to finish the archival work that I'm committed to doing, making no assumptions that there's plenty of time to get it done.

My archive collection, I believe, does not belong to me but to those who carry on our people's struggles. How could I pass on what I had accumulated? And then along comes Gabby Gillespie, bringing not only the bright promise of passionate activism, but also a hunger for learning and preserving this history. Meeting her was a godsend, a miracle.

Now & Then: **How has your collaboration influenced your work?**

Gabby: I have always been interested in history, and especially women's roles in political movements. From Kipp I learned first-hand about the amazing solidarity that was built not only all over the country, but that spanned the globe. I was awestruck.

I am honored to be building, sharing, and writing with her, and learning from her the intergenerational knowledge to have a holistic understanding of what came before us. I encourage all activists to create intergenerational bonds with others who have been involved in the struggle for liberation.

Kipp: Meeting Gabby gave me great hope that the movement to stop the rape and plunder of the Appalachian mountains and streams will make a difference. In the fight for justice, we need hope, laughter, and good music. When we organize across generations—and history and passion join forces—we'll keep the flame burning.

A Breach

Marc Harshman

We are engaged in a great civil war
over the future of the land
upon which this nation of varied peoples stand,
of the land that has up to now nourished
and nurtured the people who
borrow from it their sustenance.
- Anonymous

Open now the crystal fountain,
Whence the healing stream doth flow.
- William Williams 1717–1791

Through a Little Hole

I

It's been hand-signals, shouts all afternoon, but now Roy lets in the clutch, turns the key, and the whirring slap of the Allis Chalmers' idle is stilled. I can hardly see for the sweat, brush the chaff from my sleeve, and drag the flannel across my face. I notice Roy lift his cap to do the same.

The sudden silence is godly. Thunderclouds are lifting in the west.

Good thing we got her done.

I nod my head—too whipped to speak: three hundred bales, two men, and this last sixty yet to get back to barn and into the mow.

Roy's eighty-two, but he slips off the metal seat like a teenager and begins to lope toward the trees below the far side of the knoll. His back to me, he lifts a hand for me to follow. Though I didn't think I could move, I tramp behind him several hundred yards into the shade, but even here it's still hot—ninety degrees forecast—perfect for hay but takes it out of you. I'd hayed with Roy several summers but never this back field off the point.

Though we descend lower along the hill, we're not headed for the run. Eventually, he stops: *Listen*. And when the cicada overhead cuts its droning screed, I hear it, a steady, small splashing onto stone and, ducking under a tangle of briars: There's the spring flowing out of its metal pipe. I learn later Roy's dad set it half a century ago into this mossy sandstone bank our path had skirted these last few minutes. Looped over a sycamore branch hangs a single, blue enamel cup. Roy's bony, bronze hand slips it off, fills it, and hands it to me—holy hell, is it ever cold . . . I have to sip to keep it from numbing my teeth. But . . . my lovely Jesus . . . how can water be this sweet?

For the first time in hours, I cool off and, handing the cup back to Roy, slip down, my back against the uneven bank and feel my shoulders loosen, and I breathe. We sit like this for a little eternity, lulled by the sound of this liquid God-gift, pure-raw-crystalline and perfect-sacred water . . . I will remember this. Even hours later, scratchy, throwing that last bale into the dark corner of the dusty mow, I will remember and know my thirst was slaked . . . by water pouring, free, through a little hole in a pipe, through a little hole in the earth.

Annoated Timeline for "A One-Inch Hole"

II

January 9, 2014 [near Charleston, West Virginia]

Early—A *one-inch hole* begins leaking hazardous methylcyclohexane methanol (MCHM) from Freedom Industries' chemical storage tank into the soil, then into the Elk River, and then into the West Virginia American Water Company's intake system, which supplies the water for 300,000 West Virginians. Into them, too, this poison flows . . . There is a *breach* in the system.

Thousands are drinking morning coffee.

8:15 a.m.—Odor complaints to the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

Children are drinking water, brushing teeth.

Photo of river by O.J. Early. Image of tanks courtesy of *Charleston (WV) Gazette-Mail.*

11:10 a.m.—Three hours later, DEP officials travel 6.4 miles and arrive at Freedom Industries. MCHM identified.

Families, businesses, cafeterias, chefs are washing dishes, preparing foods, setting glasses of water upon tables.

12 noon—West Virginia American Water Company (WVAWC) is aware of spill but assumes its filters can manage.

School children in nine counties are drinking from water fountains.

4:00 p.m.—WVAWC realizes filter system won't be able to handle spill.

Parents are preparing dinner, washing clothes, drinking, and bathing.

5:09 p.m.—WVAWC reports water problem.

Pregnant mothers are washing and drinking, young mothers nursing and feeding.

5:45 p.m.—WVAWC advises customers not to drink water.

Everyone until this minute has been drinking, bathing, washing, and will continue to do so until this news filters down to them.

9:32 p.m.—Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin declares state of emergency and advises residents to "continue to refrain from using the water for drinking, cooking, cleaning, bathing, and washing."

Disingenuous or simply . . . too little too late?

January 11—"This was not a coal company incident. This was a chemical company incident."—Governor Tomblin

MCHM's primary, if not only, use in the world is as a cleaning agent for washing coal.

January 13—Water declared safe to drink.

Pregnant mothers resume washing and drinking, other mothers their nursing and feeding.

January 15–The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urges pregnant women not to use the water.

What the . . . ?

January 19—A special meeting in the Governor's chambers. Invited are the West Virginia Chamber of Commerce, the Oil and Gas Association, and the West Virginia Coal Association. Their task is to design recommendations for legislation regarding future accidents. Where are the voices of the innocent? Where is any voice but vested corporate interests?

February 2—from *The Guardian*, London, England ". . . the coal industry [in West Virginia] has spent upward of $14m a year for the past four years on lobbying efforts—not including the $14m they spent [just] last year on direct contributions to campaigns."

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones: I believe that [none] who hold [leadership positions] should ever accept favors from either side. [They] are then committed to show favors.

This is a breach in governance, the belief
in a *government of the people, by the people, for the people* . . .
There are holes in the language
where the lies creep in, holes
in pipes where the poison flows, holes
in the logic that looks the other way.

Dreams Enter Through a Hole in My Head

III

Restless night, woke in a sweat, slipped on shoes, jeans, T-shirt, went out, ducked below the pines, and walked up the pasture. The moon, lifting over Pleasant Ridge, full and sun-brilliant, shadows sharp and . . . then there was Jesus standing with the woman at the well. Desert-dry, and I was sweating again. He turned full to face me, the empty bucket at his feet, upturned, the well . . . dry, and he lifted his hands to me. They were bleeding. There were already holes in his palms, as time and place shifted—there was no living water to keep the universe right—and the woman, she turned to me, her clothes slashed, torn. She was bruised and cut all over, breasts bare, purple with angry welts—she'd been stoned. Which woman was she?

But then I knew it didn't matter, mercy had been stoned. She'd been stoned for all her trouble. She'd been stoned for trying to tell the truth about living water. She turns to me, her lips cracked, voice a ragged whisper: " . . . in our father Jacob's well, not one drop left, not even for the Messiah . . . no living water . . . ?"

I walked on and before me rose a great lake with a smell of rot upon it, dead fish, and animals and people, and licorice, and there was Jesus again, this time with those undependable fishermen, those low-life friends of his. But they'd tried, you could tell, by all their nets and the sweat streaming from their faces, or were they tears? And here was Jesus bleeding again, big holes in his feet. He could hardly stand. And now behind me I saw crowds of people, my people, the people of these mountains, and they were gathering, wailing, carrying sick children, people with rashes and throat fires and cancers and death and they were thirsty, so thirsty—and *one of the least of these* fishermen friends comes to me, weeping, and asks: *How shall we feed them, how heal so many of so much, how slake a thirst such as this?*

And somewhere north of here there were tick tankers and pipe-liners, the sand cans and brine trucks, out-of-state corporations and out-of-state workers daily threading a new slurry of poisons into earth and ancient water to lift prehistoric gas out of prehistoric rock all for profit and little enough for us who live here. It's called fracking.

There's a Hole in Their Arguments

Economy?
Huge new shipping facilities built along the coast to ship overseas and so goes the argument about alleviating fuel shortages in the USA.

Jobs?
Job growth in the industry has been greatest (as a share of total employment) in West Virginia. Still, shale-related employment is less than one percent of total West Virginia employment and less than half of one percent of total employment in all the other states.

Environment?
Lift this cup to your lips, o taste and see: Benzene, Ethylbenzene, Toulene, Xylene, Napthalene, Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, Methano, Formaldehyde, Ethylene Glycol, Glycol Ethers, Hydrochloric Acid, Sodium Hydroxide, C8, Diesel Fuel . . .

Changes?
Murder. Prostitution. Vehicular homicide. Drugs. Prostitution. Crumbling infrastructure in rural counties. Oh, yes, groundwater contamination, the living water too fouled to drink, to bathe. But these little catastrophes rarely make the national news . . .

Questions?
Go ask . . . Chesapeake, Dominion Energy, Stonewall Gas Gathering, LLC, Consol Energy, MarkWest, EQT, Trans Energy, Jay-Bee Oil and Gas, East Resources, Range Resources, Southwestern Energy Co., Williams Companies, Baker Hughes, DuPont, Schulumberger . . . [and] Halliburton.

Go ask them: Is there *anything* that trumps profit? This simple question answers all others. That *anything* includes increased unemployment, species extinction, murder, prostitution, increased drug use, increased automotive violence, infrastructure collapse, flaming faucets, blackened water, poisoning of wildlife, cattle, children.

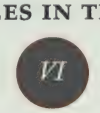
The Hole That Remembers an Ancient Well

"How slake such a thirst?"

I couldn't stay and walked away, and minutes-into-hours later suddenly there was more water, a great sea and there was Jesus again, setting out to walk those waters, to calm the storming waves but then there were no waves, there was no storm; the disaster had already come and gone—there was no sea, it was dry, dry sand. It was the valley of dry bones, thousands and thousands of them, and Jesus wept for these uncounted numbers of Lazarus-dead, and the twelve wept, and Mary wept, and Lazarus wept, and myself, and everyone I knew wept for how could even Jesus with his hands so bloodied and mangled ever begin to knit flesh and sinew back into these bones, how fix, how especially if there was no water to cleanse those wounds, to mop his sweet face, how when there were only bile and vinegar and licorice water, how to do all this without . . . without living water?

You shall not pollute the land in which you live . . . You shall not defile the land in which you live, in the midst of which I dwell, for I the Lord dwell in the midst of the people of Israel.
Numbers 35:33-34, ESV

Other Holes in the Ground



"Marcellus Miracle to Save the Economy"

Is it just the moon flaring
behind the jagged silhouette of the ridgeline?
He is alone in the deep cliff-cut

of the stream, shadow-less
and wary—only the stream talking.
He's seen enough this past year:
the wrecks, paved roads become dirt,
Orma's dog, Finley's garden,
his own mailbox . . .
Forget compensation—find a lawyer,
and before you know it things go missing around the farm,
your wife gets anonymous threats. Coincidences?
Or that college boy murdered in Wheeling, or the two women
crushed in their car by fracking pipe rolling off a truck.
Just an *accident*. Not industry truckers but *"subcontractors."*

Vera Scroggins, unarmed but for words and silver hair, is banned from setting foot on 312.5 square miles of northeast Appalachian Pennsylvania which is still in the democracy called America. And gag orders are placed on children never to speak about fracking or Range Resources and what went on around Mount Pleasant, Pennsylvania in 2011.

When the drill rigs came
for the new gas every one was asleep
with their eyes open
and times were tough and money talked
more persuasively than any stream.
So, tonight he's standing beside the noisy stream,
not sleeping but watching.

He wants to see, to see what they're doing up there now.
Is it another screw-up, flames not moon—a flare-out
or spill that's found a cigarette, a spark . . .

When you can't see the forest, can't see the trees,
well, *you don't miss your water till your well runs . . .*
dry or black, flames or poison . . .
Brookies lived in those pools on Lower Bowman, a night sky
so brilliant with dark the stars pulsed in tune with living hearts.
The Chesapeake glare destroys the night
and the 24/7 roar destroys the day—
and we had the best well water in the county, cold and pure as any spring.

A Few Sentences Threading the Holes Together

VII

I've stood in the midnight wilderness and seen it lit
daylight-bright with well rigs.
I've seen the road wind in and out along the orange
stream below the mountain.
I've seen the gray and brown waste smoking with
dust under summer's sun.
I've seen where the cemetery was shoveled over
the side of the hill.
I've seen the bullet holes and graffiti on
Larry's outbuildings.
I have a piece of fuse I picked up on Kayford Mountain.
I've stood in a hotel room listening to a lovely woman
telling me not to drink the water.
I've walked a sidewalk where a young man was murdered
because an out-of-state worker had enough of
a crap job and enough beer to light his fuse.
I've seen gas and coal drive unemployment up
and property prices down, down, down.
I've seen enough that no politician can ever lie to me again
about how it's all about jobs, how it's war on coal, how
it's the EPA, how it's not his fault, how it's not poetry,
how it is . . .

A Small Hole a Last Poem Enters

VIII

A cold, steady flow
unseen and
splattering upon soft stone,
goes where it will down
the hill and away.
Chances were good, once,
under the unbroken shade
of the Alleghenies
it might find itself joined, here, there,
and with every joining increase
into stream, river, and
finally sea, the great path's destination
to brew the rain, to slake the all-thirst
that drives us living, alive, filled
with waters not marred by the hand of men.

Notes: Stanzas 4 and 6: Coal River Mountain Watch, Ohio Policy Matters, *Appalachian Voices*, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.
Section 5 ". . . you don't miss your water till your well runs dry" is an echo from William Bell's 1961 soul song, "You Don't Miss Your Water."

Marc Harshman, the Poet Laureate of West Virginia, lives in Wheeling. His work has appeared in numerous journals and been widely anthologized. The author of four chapbooks, his second full-length poetry collection, *Believe What You Can*, will appear in 2016. His twelve children's books include *The Storm*, a Smithsonian Notable Book.

My Melungeons and Me

Ashley L. Love

My identity is made up of many roles: educator, mother, partner, event planner, and emerging scholar. My ethnicity is similarly complex. I have skin the color of sand and eyes the color of mahogany. My hair is as curly as a spring coil, turning blonde in the summer. My mother is fair in complexion with hazel eyes and a broad nose, and my father's skin is the color of milk chocolate. Both have family roots in Appalachia. As I grew older, people asked, "What are you and where is your family from?" It was a question I could not answer because I never felt in possession of the truth—my truth.

What broke this impasse was practicing Sankofa. I first heard of that concept from Dr. Cynthia Dillard as a doctoral student at the University of Georgia in a class titled "From Africa to America and Back Again." Sankofa, she explained, means to go back and fetch something and bring it forth. In Sankofa it is understood that one person cannot exist without the rest of humanity. The class challenged me. What did I know about Africa? And what did I know about myself that would enable me to go anywhere and bring back anything?

Then I thought back to my earlier master's work at Ohio University and realized I had practiced aspects of Sankofa before. My master's studies had focused on the Melungeon communities of Appalachia; I chose the topic after two unrelated incidents suggested Melungeon ancestry on two sides of my mother's genealogy. My search targeted two maternal grandparents—my mother's father, Thomas O. Redd, and her father's mother, Cora H. Love.

A framed photograph of my great-grandfather Thomas Redd, smiling and in a plaid suit, was displayed prominently in our home in Ohio. Thomas was born in 1895 in Watauga County, North Carolina, just east of what is now the Cherokee National Forest. My mother told me stories about his resilience and positive approach to life. He taught my mother and his other grandchildren how to plant gardens and grow their own food; he told them stories, read to them, and showered them with love. My mother still speaks of him as though he had been her angel on earth. But I pressed her for more information: What was his heritage? What did he do for a living? Where did he attend school?

In my early master's-level research on Melungeon communities, Redd was not a common surname. I was discouraged. Thomas had all the characteristics of a Melungeon: He had African ancestry and was the grandson of Colonel Eggleston, a white Confederate soldier; his mother was Cherokee. I mapped the geography of his life and understood that although he moved frequently and lived outside the region, he always called Appalachia home.

My master's thesis reflected that disconnection. I wrote about origin theories, communities of color, and Melungeon communities' early advocacy for diversity and inclusion in the broader community. Like African Americans, Melungeons struggled with isolation and discrimination. As an "outsider," I interviewed relatives and friends who were Melungeon and ended my research.

In my early doctoral coursework, my identity questions came up again, in a deeper way. Dr. Dillard encouraged me to keep my mind open while embracing the process of Sankofa. It was easy enough to connect with the idea of Melungeon, African American, and indigenous identities—but not Appalachian. The field of Appalachian Studies appeared

largely to be occupied by non-African American, non-indigenous scholars.

Soon afterwards I began talking to a family friend about my journey through (re)membering. This individual was my mother's oldest friend who had grown up with my mother and her siblings and lived a stone's throw from Cora H. Love.

When I uttered the word "Melungeon," she immediately said, "Like your great-grandmother Cora?" I had never seen a photograph of Cora, but she was described to me as olive-skinned with exotic features that made her appear racially ambiguous, although she was said to have Portuguese ancestry. In describing Cora, this family friend had defined the physical attributes of a Melungeon archetype and of tri-racial people in Appalachia. According to my friend, many people in Norton, Virginia, often referred to Cora as a Melungeon matriarch because of her strong social, familial, and religious ties to the local Melungeon community. But what did that mean to me, her great-granddaughter? And what could I bring forth from her past?

When I first decided to pursue Appalachian Studies, I did so with hesitation. I was born in central Ohio, which, by definition, was not Appalachian. How could I explore culture in a region in which I have never resided? Also, it was difficult to identify as having roots in a region which was mostly white and rural.

I couldn't take on the big questions yet, but decided to research how Appalachian Studies has framed the histories of communities of color. The two tri-racial, isolated communities in Appalachia that I began with were the Carmel Indians of southeast Ohio and the Vardy Community in Hancock County, Tennessee. Both groups shared African, European, and Native American ancestry and established self-sustaining communities with their own churches, schools, and other social supports. The Vardy Community School was established in 1892 as a Presbyterian mission school; at the time, it was the only institution providing primary education for multiracial Melungeon children.

A study of court records and transcripts of Melungeons who fought for the right to own land and vote helped me better understand the early struggles for equality in the United States, and how the system of oppression and discrimination was enforced on Melungeons. As a woman of color, I saw few women writing or telling or retelling the Melungeon story. Most of the narratives were from white men who came to embrace their mixed-race heritage.

Recently I made a startling discovery through my family research. My great-grandmother Cora's husband, Julius, was classified as mulatto at birth, listed in various census records as mulatto/white, and died as a black man.

Embedded in the struggle of mixed-race identity is the idea of "passing" or opting into mixed-race identities. Although I share as many European features as I do indigenous and African, I am clearly not white and could never "opt in" to being a woman of color. Being a multiracial, third-generation Melungeon just starting my journey as a researcher, it was hard to accept fully the idea of "Melungeon" as "me" despite the mounting evidence.

Then, in March 2015, I attended my first Appalachian Studies Association (ASA) conference in Johnson City, Tennessee. My interest was not only academic. Beatrice Redd, my grandmother and the daughter of Hattie and Thomas O. Redd, was born near Johnson City, and I wanted to see the mountains I grew up hearing about and the place where many of my ancestors had lived.

Presenting at the conference was emotionally intense, but I found fellowship with others presenting on communities of color in Appalachia. My voice was welcomed, and this gave me hope that researchers and scholars are not merely paying lip service to justice and equality in the region. Within Appalachian Studies there seems to be a heightened awareness that whiteness is not synonymous with Appalachian identity.

Recently I made a startling discovery through my family research. My great-grandmother Cora's husband, Julius, was classified as mulatto at birth, listed in various census records as mulatto/white, and died as a black man. His racial identity was changed by the coroner. How common an experience was this for mixed-race Appalachians?

Through the reworking of mainstream perceptions of Appalachia, activists and scholars can influence economic, educational, political, and social change and can revise the legacy of its mixed-race communities. I am still sorting through my role in all of this, but now have a vested interest in effecting change. I had never considered myself an activist, Appalachian, or Melungeon but now am proud to say I am all three.❖

Ashley L. Love is a doctoral student at the University of Georgia in Athens.

Organizing During the West Virginia Water Crisis

Cathy Kunkel

West Virginians march in Charleston in February 2014. Photo by Vivian Stockman.

At around 4:00 p.m. on January 9, 2014, chemist Phil Price was at work in Charleston, West Virginia, when a coworker heard on the radio that a chemical spill had contaminated the city's water system. Since his house was far from the water treatment plant, Price thought that his pipes would not yet be contaminated, but he called his wife and asked her to start filling containers with water. "We filled everything we had in the house—bath tubs, five-gallon camping carboys, bottles, and pitchers," he said.

That morning, citizens living near the chemical storage facility along West Virginia's Elk River had called the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to report a strong licorice odor in the air. When DEP came to investigate, officials discovered crude methylcyclohexane methanol (MCHM)—a chemical used to clean coal—leaking into the Elk River from a 40,000-gallon storage tank belonging to Freedom Industries. At noon DEP notified West Virginia American Water Company (WVAWC), whose intake was located only a mile and a half downstream. WVAWC officials believed that the company's filtration methods could handle the unknown concentration of MCHM; by late afternoon they realized they were mistaken. The water company hurriedly held a press conference for the 6:00 p.m., news broadcasts and began robo-calling 300,000 customers notifying them not to drink the water.

The contaminated water was noticeable at Price's home by the next day. "As a chemist, I'm not particularly chemophobic," he said. "But the smell was strong. If anyone flushed the toilet, you could smell it throughout the house."

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) moved quickly, coming up with a standard on January 10 for MCHM in drinking water of one part per million. WVAWC began lifting the drinking water ban four days later. But the chemical smell persisted, and residents demanded to know whether the water was safe—a question that couldn't be answered because no solid information on MCHM existed.

For West Virginians in urban and rural areas of nine counties, everyday life was turned upside down when suddenly they could not drink from their faucets, cook, bathe,

wash clothes, or flush the toilet without releasing a strong smell. People had to wait for hours in frigid weather at water distribution sites. Many melted snow to use for washing. More than 500 people sought emergency room treatment for symptoms that were linked to MCHM. The CDC reversed its message; a few days after people in the affected areas had been given the "all clear" to drink the water, the agency turned around and warned that pregnant women "out of an abundance of caution" should not drink it. Just a week later, Freedom Industries announced that the leak included a second under-regulated chemical.

For Phil Price, an analytical chemist with thirty-five years of experience in the industry, the lack of reliable water quality data—which persisted well after the spill—was deeply frustrating. "It was unclear what decisions were being made by the water company based on what data," he said.

The official response to the crisis was chaotic. Governor Earl Ray Tomblin repeatedly tried to stop emergency water distribution, and public pressure forced him to continue. Schools opened, only to close a few days later when students and teachers became sick from the water. Public mistrust of authority deepened as people learned of the massive regulatory failure behind the spill. The Freedom Industries site had not been inspected under its Clean Water Act permit for more than a decade, and according to the *Charleston (WV) Gazette*, the water utility had never taken the time to learn what was located inside giant tanks just one and a half miles upstream of its intake. In addition, the federal government had failed to regulate tens of thousands of potentially hazardous chemicals.

The Natural Resources Defense Council reported that MCHM—along with some 62,000 other chemicals—was grandfathered into a 1976 toxics law which required no data and did not require federal testing to ensure a standard of safety. As a result, affected West Virginians could get no reliable information about MCHM in their household water supply.

The public responded to the crisis with outrage and actions that focused on three major needs: emergency water provision, rapid-response lobbying, and community town halls. Through Facebook, people organized vigils and rallies at the state capitol with scarcely a day's notice. Protesters targeted the inadequate responses of the water utility and the school board. People organized rural water deliveries, community meetings, rain barrel workshops, and training sessions on grassroots lobbying.

Social media also played an important role in helping rural communities access water. A new group, the West Virginia Clean Water Hub, used Facebook to organize emergency water provision efforts on a grassroots level and coordinated a decentralized campaign to match people who needed water with those willing to donate and distribute it. The Hub solicited volunteers and drew the support of existing organizations, including many which had been active on mountaintop removal issues. Deliberately apolitical, the Clean Water Hub focused solely on ensuring access to safe water, particularly in rural areas.

Meanwhile, a small group of organizers began hosting face-to-face community town hall meetings in Charleston. The first town hall drew more than 150 people with small-group discussions about community needs and how to access resources. Weekly community meetings followed. Five focus groups emerged: women's health, grassroots lobbying, community organizing, rainwater harvestings, and high water bills. Some focus groups continued meeting throughout the crisis. One evolved into Advocates for a Safe Water System, an ongoing community organizing effort targeting the WVAWC.

Organizer Katey Lauer, who helped set up the town halls, noted that they filled an important gap. "Newly activated people who didn't identify as environmentalists needed a place to express their outrage," she said, "and do something new born out of their acute anger and specific concerns."

On the legislative front, an informal coalition of progressive groups took advantage of political timing: The start of the water crisis coincided almost exactly with the start of the 2014 legislative session in Charleston. This coincidence had profound implications for citizen response.

The legislature immediately announced its intention to pass a bill to regulate above-ground storage tanks, supposedly to prevent such a spill from happening again. Meanwhile the coalition—including environmental, faith-based, and social-justice organizations—began meeting to develop strategy and coordinate their responses.

Collectively, coalition members had decades of lobbying experience. They were well positioned to advocate at the capitol for stronger regulations and to educate newly engaged citizens about the legislative process.

Pressure mounted on legislators as public outrage increasingly focused on them. As a result of this pressure, they passed the strong Senate Bill 373 in the 2014 legislative session.

It has been almost two years since January 9, 2014. What has changed? Where is the community now?

Active citizen involvement in the water crisis fell sharply at the end of the March 2014 legislative session. This decline of activism also roughly coincided with the end of any obvious odor of MCHM in the drinking water.

But in the words of the late Bill Howley, a member of Advocates for a Safe Water System, "If a spill like the Freedom Industries leak occurred upstream of the West Virginia American Water intake today, particularly if the chemical had no color or odor, could

we be able to avoid another mass contamination? That answer is not clear, largely because the right people are still not serious about providing safe drinking water for all West Virginians."

In other words, entities that bore some responsibility for the water crisis have largely failed to learn the lessons from the crisis.

The legislative victory won in the 2014 session was rolled back in 2015, in response to pressure from the oil and gas industry. West Virginia Public Broadcasting and environmental analysts detailed the impact; the 2015 bill reduced the number of regulated tanks from 48,000 to about 100; reduced the frequency of inspections; and increased exemptions for tanks that show compliance with existing environmental permits.

The Department of Environmental Protection has not addressed the under-regulation that led to the crisis, including its chronic inspector shortage. New regulations promulgated to implement the aboveground tank legislation fail to require tank owners to prove their ability to cover the cost of a potential spill. If those rules had been in effect before the disaster, Freedom Industries would have been required to post only a $9,600 bond to cover what has become a multi-million-dollar cleanup.

This huge cleanup has barely begun. Thousands of gallons of MCHM remain in the soil at the site. This summer the DEP reached an agreement that Freedom will pay $2.5 million for site remediation, but the agency does not appear to have a clear plan on how to clean up the massive amount of contaminated soil.

The private water company, WVAWC, launched a major public relations campaign but made few substantive changes other than to announce its plan to seek a 28 percent rate hike in 2015. Public resistance continues. Advocates for a Safe Water System has grown, and more than a year after the crisis, the group stated that the company is "not capable of delivering [a] safe water system." The group launched a campaign for a public takeover of WVAWC in September 2015.

The legislative victory won in the 2014 session was rolled back in 2015, in response to pressure from the oil and gas industry.

Phil Price joined Advocates for a Safe Water System in November 2014. "The nastier, bigger and uglier the problem is, the more important it is to clearly step back and define all the aspects of the problem. No one was doing that. If you don't define a problem, it's going to come back to bite you. My hope was that by getting involved in Advocates, we could start to address some of these issues—and we have."

Price and many other residents still don't trust the company's water. "We bought a German-technology water filtration system for the kitchen, so we're in large part drinking and cooking with treated water," Price notes. "Not because I think this incident has made our water bad. It's because most of the bad stuff that could get into your water doesn't have an odor or taste. We won't know next time."

Looking ahead in an era of accelerating crises, what lessons from this disaster can be applied?

This crisis provided a huge organizing opportunity and a chance to reach out beyond the traditional "environmentalist" base in West Virginia. "There's a certain kind of change that's possible in that kind of crisis aftermath," Katey Lauer reflected. "There are big shifts available because the problem is laid out so starkly."

The disaster also served as a reminder of the importance of organizing during normal times, outside of crisis. "One reason long-haul organizing is so important is to give communities the skills to help maximize a crisis moment—with emergency relief, relationship-building, and pushing for needed change," noted Lauer.

Phil Price echoed the need to build organizations for lasting change: "It's a matter of sustained outrage and work. Industry gets its way legislatively—as it did with the gutting of the tank bill—through a quiet but sustained effort."

Lauer agrees.

"There are so many potential threats to our infrastructure that to prepare for all of them isn't practical," she said. But some organizing principles used during the crisis—creating decentralized structures to engage new people, giving resources and trainings to new community leaders, and allowing organizers the flexibility to respond to the acute concerns—may prove useful the next time around. ❖

Cathy Kunkel is an energy analyst with the Institute for Energy Economics and Financial Analysis and a member of the steering committee of Advocates for a Safe Water System. She lives in Fayetteville, West Virginia.

Keeping the History of the Mine Wars Alive in Matewan

Lou Martin

Matewan's new museum is located in the heart of the historic town. Photo courtesy of Shawn Slifer and Catherine Moore.

Imagine that ten thousand American workers took up arms to secure basic rights, and imagine that management amassed an army to stop them. Imagine that they battled for five days, firing a million rounds of ammunition at one another, until the US Army arrived to put down the rebellion. Imagine that the event was front-page news in the *New York Times*, the leaders were put on trial, and Congress held hearings to investigate it. Imagine that after the trials and hearings little changed, and the workers returned to their homes, facing the same conditions that led to the uprising. Over the years, those bloody events faded from the public's memory until they were largely forgotten, even by many labor historians. This is the story of the 1921 Battle of Blair Mountain, the culminating event of a decade of labor conflict in the coalfields known as the West Virginia Mine Wars.

"Who made me a radical?" asked Frank Keeney, the young president of District 17 of the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in West Virginia.

"I've seen the time when I didn't have the right to eat in this state. I've seen the time when I was refused a job. I've been served with eviction papers and thrown out of my house. I've seen women and children brutally treated in mining camps. I've seen hell turned loose."

Keeney lived through turbulent times. Coal miners in the Mountain State organized between 1912 and 1922 to win rights that most Americans today take for granted, but miners and their families faced equally determined coal operators who insisted on exercising control over workers' lives, herding them into company-owned housing, paying them in scrip that could only be redeemed at the company store, and employing armed mine guards to spy on the workers and prevent union activity. In many cases, the now notorious Baldwin-Felts Detective Agency supplied the gunmen.

In 1912, when the miners were able to organize and strike on Paint Creek and Cabin Creek, the local operators turned to violence and were met with violence from the miners

TWO CENTS

FIGHTING CONTINUES IN MOUNTAINS AS FEDERAL TROOPS REACH MINGO; PLANES REPORTED BOMBING MINERS

Governor of West Virginia Issues Proclamation Placing All State Officials Under Army Control

SOLDIERS ARRIVE IN AREA

Above: Museum displays include the *New York Times* coverage of the 1921 Battle of Blair Mountain. Left: Bullet casings from both sides in the battle. Right: Miners kept canaries in cages with them underground, to detect odorless carbon monoxide and methane. Photos courtesy of Shaun Slifer and Catherine Moore.

and their families. The strike ended in compromise. Although the mine guard system and many of the other aspects of the company-town system remained in place, the workers had a signed contract, and the UMWA had a foothold in southern West Virginia. Out of that violent strike emerged new leaders of District 17 of the UMWA: President Frank Keeney and Secretary-Treasurer Fred Mooney. Steeled by experience, Keeney declared, "The only way you can get your rights is with a high-powered rifle."

When the United States entered World War I, President Woodrow Wilson hoped to avoid labor conflict and created the National War Labor Board, which recognized the rights of workers to form unions. At the same time, Wilson observed that the United States needed to make the world "safe for democracy." Coal miners knew that they played a key role in the war effort—a war for democracy—and that they had the right to form unions. Their expectations could not have been higher. District 17's membership leaped from 7,000 in January of 1917 to 17,000 within months, and at the end of the war, the UMWA launched an organizing drive in the heart of the non-union stronghold: Logan, Mingo, and McDowell Counties in southern West Virginia.

Some coal operators facing fierce competition believed that unionization would be the end of their business. Others violently resisted unionization. Between 1919 and 1921, operators controlled local law enforcement, at times had the governor declare martial law, jailed union organizers, evicted striking miners from their houses, and had several skirmishes with miners that resulted in bloodshed. This labor conflict coincided with political upheaval in Mingo County where a reform faction took over the town of Matewan, and the new mayor, C. C. Testerman, and his chief of police, Sid Hatfield, offered protection to UMWA organizers and striking miners. After Hatfield prevented Baldwin-Felt agents from evicting striking miners, the agents returned to town with a warrant for Hatfield's arrest. The ensuing gun battle left ten dead, including Albert

and Lee Felts of the Baldwin-Felts agency, five other agents, two miners, and Mayor Testerman.

Hatfield became the coal miners' hero, the only lawman willing to stand up to the operators and their hired gunmen. The following summer, Hatfield and his deputy Ed Chambers traveled to McDowell County to stand trial for allegedly blowing up a coal tipple, but on their walk up the courthouse steps, a group of Baldwin-Felts agents stepped out of hiding and killed both men in front of their wives. As the news of Hatfield's death spread, outraged miners gathered to march down to Mingo County to free UMWA organizers from jail, end martial law, and overthrow the mine guard system once and for all. They donned red bandanas and dubbed themselves the "Redneck Army." At the head of the column was twenty-eight-year-old miner and veteran of the Paint Creek-Cabin Creek strike "General" Bill Blizzard. Blizzard led the army of miners to Blair Mountain in the heart of Logan County, where they met some three- to four-thousand deputies and National Guardsmen who were entrenched on the ridgeline with a handful of .30 caliber machine guns trained down the mountainside. After five days of fighting and an unknown number of deaths, the US Army arrived, and the miners—many of them veterans—laid down their arms, saying that they would not fight Uncle Sam.

In 2013, concerned that these historic events were fading from the public memory, a small group formed to create a museum whose mission is to preserve and interpret artifacts and historical records of the local communities affected by the Mine Wars, exploring historical events from multiple perspectives through the lives of ordinary people, educating youth, promoting heritage tourism, and fostering local economic development. That group included a UMWA official, a retired Mingo County teacher, an interior architect, a community organizer, an archaeologist, a journalist, an artist, and two history professors. After two years of work, the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum had its grand opening in May 2015.

Attendees, sporting bandanas, at the Grand Opening of the museum. In the early twentieth century mine wars, miners wore red bandanas or scarves as a badge of honor. Photo courtesy of Shaun Slifer and Catherine Moore.

Matewan was chosen for the museum site because the town has embraced its labor history. It was the subject of the 1987 John Sayles film *Matewan* as well as an oral history project a couple of years later that collected dozens of interviews with residents, helping further preserve the area's labor history. Now, every year the townspeople re-enact the 1920 battle that became known as the "Matewan Massacre."

The museum has strong support. UMWA Local 1440 has supported this project from the beginning, as has the International Office of the UMWA. The Turn This Town Around project provided funding to help repair the building that houses the museum in the Matewan Historic District, and the West Virginia Humanities Council and the National Coal Heritage Area Authority have provided funding for exhibits and programming.

Those of us who developed this museum believe that it and a number of other recent efforts are helping to preserve the memory of a critical chapter in West Virginia history that might otherwise be lost. Museum board member and historian Chuck Keeney—the great-grandson of Frank Keeney—said that the museum retains its independence, as Matewan did during the mine wars. It was not a company town.

"There's no major company that's funding us and telling us what to say. And the state isn't telling us what to say," Keeney told a reporter. "We can take charge of our own narrative. And that's very liberating."

Keeney explained that understanding the past shapes the present. "During the time of the mine wars, you had mine guards. Well, now, you have mind guards," he said. "They don't have to use strong-armed tactics anymore. They control the news. They control the schools.

"When a region or a country doesn't know its own history, it's like a person with Alzheimer's disease," he said.

The museum's purpose, he said, is just the opposite—"identity reclamation"—to ensure that the artifacts and the stories will be preserved for years to come. ❖

Lou Martin, a member of the board of directors of the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum, lives in Daisytown, Pennsylvania. He is an associate professor at Chatham University.

Tabor Memorial Chapel, from a Sermon on Matthew 26

Joshua Jones

To what purpose is this waste?

I myself don't see much good in preachin' at the poor.
A doctor'd do them better than a preacher ever could.
The only reason Christ gave them a second of his time
was he had the power to fix the flesh the devil mangled.

Christ cured, assured, and moved on. Stitched their wounds
with a touch, unclenched a hand with a word, softened
a tongue with a dab of his spit, and unraveled the ropes
of sin like only God can. That's why we strung

him up, cause he went around tellin' poor folks
they were square with God without settlin'
with the rulers of this world. Rich folks—church

folks—the ones tryin' to pay God off with their ten
percent, their deductible sacrifice, won't never
know holy ground like a man who ain't got shoes.

Joshua Jones, originally from the Shenandoah Valley, has published in *Fourteen Hills*, *The Mayo Review*, and *The Sow's Ear Poetry Review*.

Creating a Culture of Justice

Photos From the Highlander Archives

Left to right: Guy Carawan sings with student sit-in leaders Bernard Lafayette and James Bevel at an April 1960 Highlander civil-rights workshop, where Carawan played an old spiritual that eventually became "We Shall Overcome"—the anthem of the 1960s civil rights movement. Photo by Thorsten Horton.

Cultural organizing energizes social movements. The Highlander Education and Research Center in New Market, Tennessee, has recognized the role of music and other cultural work in building progressive movements since its founding in 1932.

"Music has been too generally thought of as an art form for leisure time, performed and enjoyed by the chosen few," observed Zilphia Horton, a founder of Highlander who taught workers to lead singing sessions during the labor organizing drives of the 1930s.

"The folk song grows out of reality," she said in an interview with author Frank Adams. "It is this stark reality and genuineness which gives the folk song vitality and strength."

These photographs drawn from the Highlander Archives—early black-and-white pictures along with more recent, full-color images—offer a small, historical sample of its many cultural activities. Beginning with quilting bees and square dances in the early years, Highlander later engaged activists through organizing songs of the civil rights and labor movements. More recently, Highlander has held workshops on hip-hop, food education for children, and the creation of murals and banners for organizing campaigns.

Today cultural work thrives at Highlander and in other social justice groups in Appalachia. Such work grows support and solidarity; it strengthens movements around environmental and economic justice, civil rights, immigrant rights, LGBTQ rights, cooperative economics, and reform of the education and criminal justice systems. Cultural organizing places art, music, poetry, dancing, food, and other forms of expression at the center of the work of social justice in Appalachia. ❖

In November 1980, Highlander held one of a series of Coalmining Music Workshops, organized by Guy and Candie Carawan. Participants included, from left, Tillman Cadle, Lois Short, Sara Ogan Gunning, Nimrod Workman, Hazel Dickens, and George Tucker. Photo by Candie Carawan.

Phyllis Boyens sings to striking coal miners at a 1977 strike at Stearns, Kentucky. Photo by Doug Yarrow.

Participants in Highlander's 2013 Seeds of Fire Summer Youth Workshop make a mural with the Beehive Collective art group. Photo by Susan Williams.

A Haitian dancer demonstrates native dance moves at a spring 2014 Highlander workshop that focused on cultural sharing. Photo courtesy Susan Williams.

And in Case I Haven't Made It Clear By Now

Matt Prater

OK, so I'm not done yet. It's time to talk. So—
let's go back a little bit and burn some bridges.
1) I know too many people talking down on rap
who got a bootleg of David Allen Coe's X-Rated.
2) I know too many people talking up on rap
who have never heard the names Sun Ra,
June Jordan, Taj Mahal, or Ida B. Wells.
3) I know too many mes who'd excuse me
from the fight because I said this (btw: why
does the example always have to be rap?)—
4) But no, blame me: my voting for Shirley Chisholm,
without voting for her with my body every day,
wasn't enough. The game isn't controversy;
the game is risk, and poetry isn't dangerous
for white boys in the South who say Love
and mention the Dr. King of Washington,
or the post-hajj El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz;
in fact, they win awards for it, and respect,
and, to dare the cliché here, great privilege.
It's much harder to become a Clarence Jordan,
singular and dangerous though God knows why,
or to have Pinochet's men storm your house
to stamp out the fatal weapon of your verse.
I voted for Barack Obama twice. Big whoop.
I wish he were the man my neighbors hate—
the great Black Socialist par excellence, heir
to the communist King of conspiracy. He isn't.
But Lord, how I loved driving my dad's truck,
with a Jesus fish on the tailgate and his sticker
right below that, my big fat Johnny Cash stinger
ready to fly at all who didn't like it. Although
that doesn't excuse me, either. Or damn me.
Or do a single thing. Or make me special.

Matt Prater is a poet and writer from Saltville, Virginia. A previous contributor to *Now & Then*, his work has also appeared in *Appalachian Heritage*, *The Honest Ulsterman*, and *Still: The Journal*, among other publications.

Seeding Food, Farms, and Freedom

Veronica Limeberry Links India to Appalachia

Marat Moore with Veronica Limeberry

Marat Moore:

As a child, Veronica Limeberry helped her grandmother make cucumber pickles, can tomatoes, and put up corn for the winter near Asheville, North Carolina. She fell in love with gardening and fresh food, and in graduate school focused her research on industrial and indigenous food systems. Limeberry first traveled to India in 2009 as an intern and met Dr. Vandana Shiva, an internationally known agroeconomist. She returned last year on a Fullbright Fellowship to work with Shiva and Indian women farmers with a goal of building ties between farmers in southern Appalachia and India.

Veronica Limeberry:

It was my family's connection to place and food that helped me to see how disconnected our region and society have become, and how harmful this has been to local economies, individual health, and knowledge.

Census records for southern Appalachia (Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, and South Carolina) from the 1990s through 2010 showed that these states ranked among the top ten hungriest in every census count. Other states had high hunger rates, but southern Appalachia was the only region in which so many contiguous states had such high rates of hunger.

Recent data from India show that the country's hunger rate is about 20 percent, defined by their standards, which are not the same as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), but which are comparable in some ways. Most East Tennessee counties have hunger rates of 21 to 22 percent. There is a common belief in the United States that "people are so poor in India, they're so hungry," but we don't need to make hunger exotic—it's right here at home.

Food scholar-activist Veronica Limeberry with local produce at Boone Street Market in Jonesborough, Tennessee. Photo by Marat Moore.

MM: "Food sovereignty" is a term that's becoming more common, but many people don't know what it means.

VL: Food sovereignty goes beyond what we usually think about food production—the concept includes all parts of the food system and all the people involved. For example, why can't people afford to buy food? What's the best way to ensure that people who are poor come out of poverty and access healthy food from the land and the place where they live? To be able to use land, the soil has to be healthy, and the air, and the water. Where do the seeds come from?

Sovereignty also looks at the rights of the people themselves. Are they free? People in the United States, for example, think that buying organic produce is all they need to do—but that's often not sustainable. There are organic farms in South America that hire people and don't pay them. You need to know not only where your food comes from, but who it comes from—and how you are involved in this system.

A "seed sister," right, leads the discussion at a local women's food sovereignty group about the seed-saving practices at Navdanya. Photo courtesy of Veronica Limeberry.

MM: Limeberry works and does research at Navdanya, the farm network, created by Shiva, which now spans a wide collection of seed keepers, organic producers, and 122 community seed banks across India.

VL: Dr. Shiva is a fierce proponent of living systems—specifically a paradigm that values the interconnection of all life, from the air to water to soil to land to plants to animals and humans. She offers an alternative model of development that focuses on regenerative sustainable "agroecology," which recognizes that in order to have healthy life, we must have healthy environments and cultures of respect and empowerment.

Shiva believes in "care" as opposed to profit. Big agriculture—especially the extensive chemical inputs—has destroyed land, lives, and cultures across India and the world. However, a care approach values indigenous knowledge; cultures of place; human empowerment; and the life of the soil, water, and air. It restores the earth, sequestering carbon through healthy soil maintenance and preventing major climatic events. The care model also regenerates biodiversity—fostering pollinators, adding nutrients in the soil and food, and preventing widespread food diseases that could wipe out populations.

This alternative paradigm is important to all of us, because the path we are on—controlled by a handful of global corporations—is destroying living systems. We see this in the many disasters, wars, and genocides happening globally—where water or agricultural land is destroyed and people struggle to survive and often die. We see it in companies that exploit workers while polluting the land, leading to tragedies such as the Charleston, West Virginia, water contamination or the Bhopal gas disaster in India.

MM: You have said that white privilege is one of the most entrenched social structures in the world.

VL: Everywhere I go in India, I'm recognized because of my whiteness and given privilege that local people lack. This is personally distressing, but it's important to remember that "white guilt" only perpetuates the oppression that allows white privilege in the first place.

Being aware of one's whiteness and openly discussing it is a first step. Beyond that, it's critical to pick up on how a person's whiteness gives him or her access to a world that others do not have, and to speak out against this to those who have power. In rural India, for example, officials and program leaders are more willing to give me an audience than a local woman.

It's important for me to ask them directly why they chose to see me today instead of this local woman—often I will bring her with me and disregard attempts to direct questions at me.

Embedding yourself in the culture is important. I live with the women here, drink chai with them, work long and hot days with them, and share my own story of why I'm here and what I'm doing. If they want to participate in an interview or have their photograph taken, that will evolve over the course of forming relationships.

MM: After first meeting Shiva during her 2009 internship, Limeberry helped bring her back the following year to deliver a sold-out lecture at East Tennessee State University. She also learned that Shiva was a friend of Wendell Berry.

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GROW APPALACHIA BUILDS REGIONAL FOOD MARKET

CANDACE MULLINS

Children at the Boys & Girls Club in Bristol, Tennessee, learn gardening skills from Deni Peterson, right, from Appalachian Sustainable Development. Photo courtesy of Grow Appalachia.

Grow Appalachia, a program of Berea College, works with existing community-based "partner site" organizations to disperse grants and give technical assistance related to organic gardening. In 2015 the program assisted 2,800 families through forty-three partner sites in five Appalachian states—Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, Virginia and Ohio. Grow Appalachia's goal is to support the unique missions of partner site organizations while providing them information and supplies related to organic gardening and local food production. The program has helped more than a dozen farmers markets with financial support for educational classes and equipment.

In the past five years, the number of farmers markets has risen nationally by nearly 20 percent. Support from the USDA, the healthcare industry, and other funders has expanded access for low-income families through federal food subsidy programs. In Kentucky, for example, the Double Dollars program sells twice the amount of farmers market produce previously available through EBT, SNAP, WIC, and Senior Voucher programs. At one partner site in Letcher County, Kentucky, community leaders provide set-up for farmers on market day and have partnered with the health industry on the new FARMACY program, which allows physicians to prescribe free vouchers to patients for fresh produce to be redeemed at the farmers market. On a market day in July 2015, most producer vendors had sold out in the first two hours; FARMACY accounted for more than half the sales.

At a site visit at the Boys & Girls Club in Bristol, Virginia, I saw kids sprint to their raised garden beds. Deni Peterson, the Grow Appalachia coordinator for Appalachian Sustainable Development, works with the kids each month. Such efforts help create the next generation of farmers and producers—a critical need, given that the average age of today's farmers is fifty-five.

Community development also occurs. Grow Appalachia holds mandatory workshops year-round for partner sites. These workshops brought an unexpected outcome. For example, mountaintop removal activists and retired coal miners have sat at the same table. Food brings everyone to the table.

Monitoring and supporting progress at its partner sites, Grow Appalachia is witnessing the increase in small-scale local agriculture. Communities are investing in food hubs, shared-use commercial kitchens, and farmers markets. New farmers are sinking their fingers into Appalachian soil. Healthy produce is being grown for schools, hospitals, and food banks. Together, we are contributing to a robust food system unique to central Appalachia. ❖

Candace Mullins is the coordinator for marketing and evaluations for Grow Appalachia at Berea College.

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VL: When Dr. Shiva came to ETSU, several of us had just returned from a week-long training on mountaintop removal at Kayford Mountain, West Virginia. We shared this with her over tea, and she was completely stunned to hear about such exploitation happening in our region—similar to the degradation happening to the beautiful mountains of India. After our discussion she reframed her entire talk to tie it to what was happening in Appalachia and how this connected to her work in India.

MM: Back in India for nine months, Limeberry says that intercultural work requires relearning and being as open as a child.

VL: I am not in India to teach anyone anything—I'm here to learn and share in mutual respect. I never compare their lives with mine back home—these are different worlds, and in this world I truly am a child. I have to learn the language from scratch, speak slowly, and listen.

The reason I travel or work with people here is to learn valuable lessons that can be translated back home—lessons in decolonizing our own land and cultures, in resisting dominant paradigms that make us unhealthy, and in reclaiming our own indigenous knowledge systems.

If I come to work as a colonizer myself—someone unwilling to listen, forcing my own beliefs and ways of being in the world—then how can I engage in work that seeks to impower people and shift the world into new, healthier living systems? It's about being open and honest with yourself and the people you work with.

MM: Veronica's day on the farm in India begins with chapatis and beans or millet pudding, and masala chai. She sweeps, pulls weeds in the fields of vegetables, helps local seed savers, cleans and bags for the kitchen, studies agro-ecology, and attends food sovereignty group meetings. The women farmers spend their days differently.

VL: The farmers have constant work—they milk and feed the cows, sow seeds, inventory the seed bank, irrigate paddy fields if necessary, and more. They're also caring for their children and elders in their family. Because of this, many of them are unable to attend school and feel unable to talk to extension agents or people in positions of power. During one conversation, I asked to work with a woman on her farm; she agreed if I would teach her how to read and write.

From my time with a local women's food sovereignty group, it seems that these women believe their success is in their numbers. When a community of women works together, they can get more work done on each other's farms, have access to shared food, and even gain social power through their collective efforts—in confronting domestic abuse as a group, for example, or demanding government funding equal to that given to male farmers.

Farmers here don't want to depend on chemical inputs that drain their money and pollute their land, but the government offers subsidies to agribusiness to increase the use of pesticides and herbicides, creating toxic run-off, which destroys healthy soil and water. Small farmers get trapped in a "chemical treadmill"—to restore their land, they are told they have to use more chemicals.

Navdanya is a force against big agriculture. The women's food sovereignty groups and other organizations are reclaiming power through the spread of indigenous seed banks, farmer-to-farmer workshops on mixed-crop organic farming, and pressuring officials for resources for sustainable farming.

MM: As in Punjab, so in California—the most fertile regions of the world are threatened by drought, and alternative approaches must be pursued, Limeberry says. The United States food system will change—and soon.

VL: The breadbaskets of the world are drying out and being depleted to the point of unproductivity. Unless we seriously pursue an ethic of care to regenerate life and knowledge, the future of the global food supply is at stake.

In the United States, we can see the food system failing. California will not be the nation's breadbasket much longer. The drought will get worse. It's climate change. The USDA knows this and is making contingency plans to regionalize the nation's food supply. Our food system will change, perhaps dramatically. Who controls the new food system will shape our future. We need to accept this reality and train more people to go out into their communities and tell their neighbors what is happening so we can prepare for this seismic shift.

My dream is to build cross-cultural dialogues and connect the work of regional organizations—such as Jonesborough Locally Grown (which operates Boone Street Market) and the Appalachian Resource Conservation & Development Council—to the educational programs at Navdanya. I want to help enable farmers to exchange knowledge across the globe.

❖

Marat Moore is the author of *Women in the Mines: Stories of Life and Work*. Her work has appeared in *The American Voice*, *Yale Journal of Law and Feminism*, *Appalachia Inside Out* and other publications. She lives in Jonesborough, Tennessee.

Roy Acuff and the "Trial of the Century"

Wayne Winkler

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What The People Don't Know WILL Hurt Them

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ROY E. FAIRCLOTH SHOT, KILLED

New Red Moves In Laos Area

VIENTIANE, Laos (AP)—A Defense Ministry spokesman announced pro-Communist forces Friday occupied Houei Sai on the Mekong River forming Laos' border with Thailand.

A spokesman said, Houei Sai government troops, together with partisans of Nam Tha defenders who were trying desperately to reach the town with pro-Communists on three sides, were with drawn to the south.

FAIRCLOTH P

Faircloth's Body Loaded Into Ambulance

Faircloth stands in shocked silence as attendants load [illegible] Faircloth into an ambulance shortly after he [illegible] doorway of the warehouse which houses the Faircloth Co. paint shop. Faircloth was dead upon arrival at Memorial Hospital. Staff Photographer Herchel Ornduff took this picture and the two below shortly after the shooting.

H. Smithdeal Faces Charges

By CRILE BEVINGTON

Roy E. Faircloth was shot and killed last night just outside of a Lamont Street warehouse where a group of Nashville entertainers were being featured as part of a three-day sales campaign sponsored by the local car dealer.

Within minutes after Faircloth was fatally shot Buck T. Smithdeal, owner of Yellow Cab Co. here was taken into custody and had confessed to the shooting police said.

The incident occurred at about 8 p. m.

Faircloth, president of Faircloth Chevrolet Co. was shot three times twice in the left side and once in the head, while hundreds of people inside the warehouse listened to Roy Acuff and The Open House Gang, a group brought to Johnson City by the car dealer to highlight a three-day campaign of car bargain sales.

Witnesses rounded up by police following the shooting all established that Smithdeal, local businessman and sportsman made no attempt to flee following the shooting.

Earnest Ervin, one of two night watchmen at Faircloth Chevrolet Co. said he was standing a short distance away when the shooting occurred.

Ervin, as well as numerous other witnesses, gave a similar account of the fracas which led to the shooting of Faircloth, who was listed as dead on arrival at Memorial Hospital.

The night watchman said Smithdeal, after pulling his automobile up to the doorway of the warehouse, got out of his car and climaxed and a sex cafeteria started to make his way into the building.

Ervin said Faircloth had been was directed to ask for bids on [illegible] setting at the doorways to the plans already drawn. Bid will be

ROY FAIRCLOTH ... Shooting Victim

More School Construction Authorized

ELIZABETHTON — The City Commission last night authorized the construction of workshops at Junior High School and another [illegible] and a new cafeteria [illegible] at Douglas School.

City Manager Paul Crumley was directed to ask for bids on

Above: Front page of the *Johnson City Press-Chronicle*. Left: Grand Ole Opry star Roy Acuff. Clipping courtesy of the author.

It was not a typical venue for the King of Country Music. Grand Ole Opry star Roy Acuff had played on stages big and small across America. He had performed on Opry broadcasts from the fabled Ryman Auditorium, on Hollywood sound stages, and on flatbed trucks while running for governor of Tennessee. But on a hot late summer afternoon in 1962, Acuff found himself in a stifling, crowded courtroom in Jonesboro (now spelled Jonesborough), a tiny town in northeast Tennessee.

His audience listened intently, as if he were singing one of his many hit songs. But Roy Acuff wasn't singing any songs that day. He was testifying at a murder trial. Acuff's longtime friend and political ally was on trial for killing the man who had hired Acuff to perform four months earlier. The murder took place at that performance. Both the victim and the accused were prominent businessmen in nearby Johnson City. And Acuff's testimony was the highlight of what some people already were calling "The Trial of the Century."

Two decades earlier, Roy Acuff had been a rising star in country music. A fiddler and singer from Maynardville, Tennessee, Acuff joined the Grand Ole Opry in 1938. With his group The Smoky Mountain Boys, Acuff recorded and performed hits like "The Great Speckled Bird," "Wreck on the Highway," "Blue Eyes Crying in the Rain," "Wabash Cannonball," and many others. In 1942 he joined with songwriter Fred Rose to establish Acuff-Rose Music, which soon became the biggest music publishing company in country music.

There were those who believed Acuff's popularity could serve him well in politics. Acuff turned down opportunities to run for governor of Tennessee in 1944 and 1946 (at that time, governors served two-year terms), but in 1948 he accepted the Republican nomination.

Acuff drew crowds to his rallies, where he performed his songs and did yo-yo tricks, but the crowds mostly came out for the music, not out of any conviction that he would make a good governor. Although he drew more votes than

any Republican gubernatorial candidate had ever received in Tennessee, it wasn't enough, and Democrat Gordon Browning won the election.

It was during that campaign, however, that Acuff became friends with Johnson City businessman Hack Smithdeal, who campaigned for Acuff in northeast Tennessee. Smithdeal owned (or would soon own) several businesses, including the Yellow Cab Company of Johnson City, a dairy farm, a restaurant, and a boat dealership.

Smithdeal also raised Plott hounds, a breed of hunting dog developed in western North Carolina. He used these dogs for hunting bear, and several times had Acuff along as a guest. It was on one of these trips that Smithdeal introduced Acuff to another Johnson Citian, Roy Faircloth.

Faircloth came to Johnson City from Miami in 1952, purchasing the Hill-Summers Chevrolet dealership there after the death of owner Paul Hill. A showy self-promoter, Faircloth immediately began staging big, raucous sales promotions, and often hired Roy Acuff and his group to perform.

But the friendship between Hack Smithdeal and Roy Faircloth was short-lived. United Press International (UPI) would report later that Smithdeal and Faircloth had a falling-out after attending the Kentucky Derby together. Other locals had a variety of theories about the cause of the bad blood. But Patty Smithdeal Fulton, Hack's daughter and the author of *Let The Record Show: The True Story of Hack Smithdeal and Johnson City's Trial of the Century* (2001, Hillsboro Press), claims the hostilities began with a business deal that went badly.

Locals later testified to hearing harsh words from both men over the years, but Fulton says in her book that her father was subjected to a campaign of harassment from Faircloth. She described Faircloth as a crude hustler, a bully, and a wife beater, and says he often made harassing, repeated phone calls to the Smithdeal home at night. Sometimes the calls contained threats, sometimes heavy breathing, and sometimes just silence.

It all came to a head on the night of Thursday, May 10, 1962. Roy Acuff and his band were performing at the Faircloth Motors warehouse on Lamont Street. It was the second night of a three-night sales promotion, and about 500 people were there to hear the country music legend.

According to the next day's UPI report, Smithdeal drove to the warehouse at the height of the festivities and parked his car so that it blocked the main doorway. Mr. Faircloth was on the stage while Acuff and his "Open House Gang" took a brief rest from pounding out their hillbilly tunes. Mr. Faircloth left the stage and ordered Smithdeal to move his car. The other man refused. Mr. Faircloth, a 200-pounder, removed his glasses and knocked Smithdeal to the ground. Smithdeal allegedly pulled [a .25-calibre automatic pistol] from his pocket and fired "four or five shots."

The bullets struck Faircloth in the head and heart and he was dead on arrival at the hospital. Police got conflicting statements from more than a dozen witnesses at the scene.

Roy Acuff was booked for another night of the Faircloth Chevrolet promotion, but that show was cancelled and Acuff and his band checked out of their hotel on Thursday night after the shooting. They had all given statements to the police, and Acuff knew they were likely to be summoned to testify at Smithdeal's trial.

The shooting made national news, courtesy of a UPI story distributed on Friday, May 11. A prominent businessman, an honorary colonel of the staff of Governor Buford Ellington, shot and killed the owner of the largest Chevrolet dealership in the South in front of 500 witnesses, with no known motive.

Several witnesses had told police at the scene of the shooting that Smithdeal appeared to be drunk when he arrived at the Faircloth warehouse, and the first charge placed against him was public drunkenness. After Faircloth was officially pronounced dead, Smithdeal faced a murder charge, and a judge released him on a $10,000 bond.

From the start, many in Johnson City believed Smithdeal had received preferential treatment. A week after the shooting, Washington County Attorney General Lodge Evans convinced the grand jury to indict Police Chief Clifford Mullinex on charges of malfeasance relating to the arrest of Smithdeal. These charges included failure to charge Smithdeal with murder at the time of his arrest, falsifying official records to indicate that a murder charge had been placed at that time, failure to notify the district attorney of the shooting, and charging Smithdeal with drunkenness in order to help him establish a defense based on diminished capacity. A jury took only ten minutes to find Mullinex "not guilty."

The trial date for Smithdeal was set for May 31, just three weeks after the shooting. His attorneys argued for more time, saying that he needed surgery for a perirectal abscess. The judge agreed to delay the trial until September. Local wits claimed, "Hack Smithdeal gave his ass to save his neck."

The trial began on Monday, September 17, at the courthouse in the Washington County seat of Jonesboro. Judge Oris Hyder presided. Tom Mitchell was the lead attorney for Smithdeal, assisted by attorneys Frank Bryant, Clyde Street, and Jack Musick. The prosecution was conducted by Attorney General Lodge Evans, his assistant Bob McDaniel Green, and Faircloth family attorney Jack Lane of Miami.

The defense worked to prove that Roy Faircloth had harassed and threatened Hack Smithdeal for years, and that Faircloth habitually carried

a pistol. The prosecution brought witnesses who testified that Smithdeal had spoken of killing Faircloth, and tried to establish that Smithdeal had gone to the Faircloth warehouse on the night of May 10 with the intention of shooting Faircloth.

Smithdeal testified on his own behalf for nearly ninety minutes. He spoke of the enmity that had grown between himself and Faircloth, of the threats and harassing phone calls he and his family had endured. He testified that Faircloth had phoned him often "and called me a no-good half-breed hillbilly S.O.B. He threatened me over the phone and to my face, saying he'd kill me if it was the last thing he did."

Roy Acuff testified on Wednesday, September 19, along with band members Jimmy Riddle and Beecher Kirby. Acuff told the court that he knew of the animosity between Smithdeal and Faircloth, and testified that he had once told Smithdeal that he would like to get him and Faircloth into church. According to Acuff, Smithdeal replied, "It'd have to be different churches."

Acuff also testified that fifteen minutes before the shooting, Faircloth had showed him a knife with a curved blade, known as a hawkbill knife. Attorney General Evans asked Acuff what a hawkbill knife was used for. "You could use it for cutting corn, or cutting a pumpkin. When he showed it to me, I told him [Faircloth], 'The only thing you could do [to a man]... with that knife is cut his throat.'" As Acuff left the stand, he bowed left and right to spectators and left the courtroom.

Closing arguments took place on Thursday, September 20. Defense attorney Tom Mitchell told the jury, "Roy Faircloth was the author of his own death. If he hadn't attacked Smithdeal, he'd be alive today. . . ." For the prosecution, Attorney General Lodge Evans stated, "I say to you there is no justification under the laws of God or man for this killing. . . . It was premeditated."

The jury deliberated that evening and the following morning. On Friday afternoon they returned to the courtroom.

The verdict was "not guilty."

The acquittal did not sit well with Attorney General Lodge Evans, who told the *Johnson City Press-Chronicle*, "I think it stinks. . . . The physical facts show there was no justification for this killing. . . . The manly way to have settled this would have been for these men to square off some night on a parking lot and get it over with."

When Hack Smithdeal got home after the acquittal, he received a congratulatory phone call from Governor Buford Ellington as Smithdeal's friends and neighbors celebrated the verdict. But there were many who felt that Hack Smithdeal had gotten away with cold-blooded murder. It was an opinion that would be passed down to succeeding generations.

On the Topix online discussion board for Johnson City, "Fred S" wrote in 2014 that he and some other teenagers had been at the Faircloth warehouse that night, enjoying the music and the free hot dogs and soda. He wrote, "Years later [I] realized that he got away with murder in front of hundreds of people. A person that worked with me who was an adult the night of the killing told me it was over a women [sic] and a car deal gone bad. . . ."

On that same discussion board, "Doggsmith," who was a small boy at the time of the shooting, wrote, "I do remember everyone scoffing about the verdict, more or less that one or both were big crooks and that there was bad blood between them."

Smithdeal withdrew from local and state politics; his first post-trial attempt to campaign for a candidate resulted in his becoming an embarrassing campaign issue. He stopped hunting, sold his Plott hounds, and eventually sold all his businesses. His daughter recalls a period of alcohol abuse. Hack Smithdeal died in 1983, unknown to younger Johnson Citians and only vaguely remembered by older residents.

Roy Acuff was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame just weeks before the shooting in Johnson City, but his career had been in decline for years. After nearly dying in a 1965 car wreck, Acuff considered retiring. But his performance on the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's seminal 1972 album *Will the Circle Be Unbroken* introduced Acuff to a new generation of listeners and established him as an authentic Old Master of American music. In 1991 he received the National Medal of Arts, as well as a Lifetime Achievement Award from the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts.

Roy Acuff died in 1992 at age eighty-two still holding the title "The King of Country Music." He is remembered today for his timeless songs, his role in popularizing country music, and his fairness in an often unfair business. But for those people who gathered in a stuffy, overcrowded courtroom in Jonesboro, Tennessee, on a hot September day in 1962, Roy Acuff also is remembered for his few minutes of testimony in the most sensational trial northeast Tennessee had ever seen.❖

Wayne Winkler is the Director of WETS-FM, East Tennessee State University's public radio station. He is a past-president of the Melungeon Heritage Association and the author of *Walking Toward the Sunset: The Melungeons of Appalachia*.

Tennessee Ernie Ford
Portrait of an American Singer, 1949–1960
Bear Family Productions

My grandmother only had five LPs to play on her Magnavox console stereo, but three of those were gospel albums by Tennessee Ernie Ford. Millions of Americans remember Ford as a singer of spiritual music, or as the host of a network television variety show, or from his guest appearances as "Cousin Ern" on *I Love Lucy*. And, of course, there was that monster hit record, "Sixteen Tons," which topped both the country and pop charts in 1955 and 1956.

Less well known is Tennessee Ernie Ford's role as a prominent West Coast country singer, and a pioneer of rock and roll. In his nearly three decades of recording for Capitol Records, Ford released country songs, remakes of folk songs and Appalachian ballads, country boogie and R&B, and novelty songs, as well as hymns and gospel music.

Bear Family's five-CD box set covers only the first dozen years of Ford's recording career and omits most of his sacred music recordings from that period since those songs are readily available elsewhere. The songs in this collection range from his 1949 hit "Mule Train" and 1950s "Hillbilly Boogie" to traditional songs such as "Barbara Allen" and "John Henry" to novelties such as "Cincinnati Dancing Pig" and "Leetle Juan Pedro."

Like previous Bear Family releases, *The Bristol Sessions* and *The Johnson City Sessions*, *Portrait of an American Singer* was produced by Ted Olson, a professor in East Tennessee State University's Department of Appalachian Studies. Olson also wrote the elaborate and detailed 120-page book that accompanies the set.

Born and raised in Bristol, Tennessee, Ernest Jennings Ford began his show business career as an announcer for WOPI radio. He studied music at Virginia Intermont College and the Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, then worked at WATL in Atlanta and WROL in Knoxville. Soon after the attack on Pearl Harbor, Ford enlisted in the US Army Air Corps. Stationed in California, Ford trained bombardiers and also served as an announcer for Armed Forces Radio, working at KFXM in San Bernadino.

While in the Army, Ford met and married Betty Jean Heminger. When the war ended, the Fords lived briefly in Bristol but soon moved back to California. Ernie went back to work at KFXM, where he hosted "Bar Nothin' Ranch Time," a country music program for which Ford developed his hillbilly persona, "Tennessee Ernie." Before long, he was signed to a recording contract with Capitol Records in Hollywood.

Ford's first record for Capitol was a self-composed country swing tune entitled "I've Got the Milk 'Em in the Mornin' Blues," pairing his manic hillbilly persona with sophisticated instrumental backing from session musicians including guitarist Merle Travis and steel guitarist Speedy West. He would revise that song the following year, changing the subject from milking cows to changing diapers, reflecting the changes in the Ford household after his first son was born, and would remake the original version in 1957.

Before his first year as a recording artist was through, Tennessee Ernie Ford had scored hits with a couple of country boogie songs, "Country Junction" (featuring the piano work of Moon Mullican, the song went to No. 14 on the chart) and "Smoky Mountain Boogie" (which reached No. 8). He topped the country chart late in 1949 with "Mule Train," which was a No. 1 pop hit for Frankie Laine earlier that year. As Ford later quipped, "While twenty-one different records were made of twenty-one different singers singing 'Mule Train,' so far as I know I was the only one who had ever driven a mule."

A 1950 duet with Kay Starr, "I'll Never Be Free," was a crossover hit, going to No. 3 on the pop chart and No. 2 on the country chart. That same year, he released his first religious-themed records, *The Lord's Lariat* and *What This Country Needs (Is a Good Old-Fashioned Talk with the Lord)*. He also recorded a jazzy arrangement of the African-American bad man ballad "Stack-O-Lee," novelties "Cincinnati Dancing Pig" and "Leetle Juan Pedro," and a classic hillbilly boogie record, *Shotgun Boogie*. Over the next couple of years, Ford would release *Rock City Boogie* and *Blackberry Boogie*, along with a cover of Willie Mabon's R&B hit "I Don't Know"—records that foreshadowed the imminent birth of rock and roll.

Ford's 1955 hit version of "The Ballad of Davy Crockett" is included in this set, along with two spoken

narratives inspired by Ford's fellow Tennessean, "The Death Hug," "A Sensible Varmint," and "Crockett's Opinion of a Thunderstorm." The popularity of Walt Disney's *Davy Crockett* series on television helped make Ford's "The Ballad of Davy Crockett" a crossover hit, but it was a song that was originally pegged as a B-side later that year that put Ford at the top of both the country and pop charts.

Arranger Jack Fascinato reinterpreted a Merle Travis song, "Sixteen Tons," replacing Travis' spare guitar backing with bass clarinet, flute, vibes, piano, guitar, and drums—and Tennessee Ernie's snapping fingers establishing the tempo. The song sold four million copies within a few months, and went to the top of the pop and country charts.

"Sixteen Tons" was a hard act to follow; Ford would never again have a hit anywhere close to that one. But by this time, Ford was beginning to be a regular fixture on television, eventually hosting The Ford Show on NBC for five years. (The show was named after the sponsor, not the host.) His recordings focused more and more on religious music, but he also recorded Appalachian and Anglo-Celtic ballads ("I Gave My Love a Cherry," "Barbara Allen"), covers of country hits ("Don't Rob Another Man's Castle," "Cold, Cold Heart"), and traditional songs drawn from the urban folk music revival ("Black Is the Color of My True Love's Hair," "Darby's Ram"). Over the dozen years covered by this collection, we hear Ford's voice grow deeper and darker, sometimes showing evidence of the operatic training he had received.

Ted Olson's essays in the accompanying book put Ford's career into perspective, and one essay tabulates Ford's "firsts." He was the first country artist to perform at the Palladium in London. His was the first network television show to feature religious music prominently. Ford was the first individual country artist to release a live album. He was the first performer to record a show at San Quentin Prison—six years before Johnny Cash. He hosted the first televised Country Music Awards. He led the first country music show to perform in the Soviet Union. He was the first country artist to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom. And, according to Olson, he was arguably the first rock and roller, or at least in the first group of white and black artists like Wynonie Harris, Ike Turner, the Delmore Brothers, Moon Mullican, and others who blended black and white musical styles to create a radically new sound.

Tennessee Ernie Ford died in 1991 and was recognized the world over as a beloved entertainer. The 154 tracks in this collection demonstrate the depth and breadth of his musical contributions and provide a fuller picture of his impressive and distinguished career.❖

John McCutcheon
Joe Hill's Last Will
Appalsongs

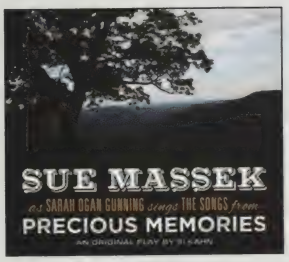
John McCutcheon portrayed Joe Hill in singer/activist Si Kahn's one-man show *Joe Hill's Last Will*. Joe Hill is remembered as the songwriter who composed songs for the Industrial Workers of the World, an international labor union formed in 1905. The philosophy and tactics of the IWW have been described as "revolutionary industrial unionism," and the "Wobblies" (as IWW members were dubbed) believed that workers should unite to replace capitalism and wage labor with industrial democracy as represented by "One Big Union." In the first two decades of the twentieth century, the Wobblies made a name for themselves, particularly among the transient farm workers of the American West; the union's membership peaked in 1917 at 150,000.

The IWW was a singing union. Many of its members were immigrants with limited skills in English who could get the union's message from a song more easily than from a printed tract. Joe Hill wrote new words to graft onto popular song melodies, creating a catalog of songs that are a part of American labor history—songs such as "The Preacher and the Slave," "The Rebel Girl," "Casey Jones the Union Scab," "There Is Power in a Union," and "It's a Long Way to the Soup Line." Hill's work particularly inspired Woody Guthrie, who grafted new, socially-conscious lyrics onto traditional and popular country melodies.

In his forty-year career, John McCutcheon has likewise focused primarily on socially- and politically-conscious songs. *Joe Hill's Last Will*, his thirty-seventh album, grew out of McCutcheon's portrayal of Hill in Si Kahn's play of the same name. Set in a cell in Utah State Prison, the play focuses on Hill in the hours before his execution for a murder that many believe Hill did not commit. The play uses Hill's own words and songs to cover topics including immigration, labor, worker's rights, war, and the death penalty—issues with which America

still struggles 100 years after Hill's death in 1915.

McCutcheon and his fellow musicians—including bassist Mark Schatz and fiddler Stuart Duncan—have created fresh arrangements of Hill's songs, giving them a contemporary feeling that belies the age of the songs. McCutcheon dedicates this collection to his friend, mentor, and IWW brother Bruce "Utah" Phillips, who was involved in the last major collection of Hill's music, the 1985 album *Don't Mourn—Organize*. McCutcheon, like Phillips, is interested in not only keeping Hill's music alive, but in addressing the same concerns Hill and the Wobblies addressed century ago.❖



Sue Massek
Precious Memories
Strictly Country Records

Sue Massek has performed solo and with the Reel World String Band for nearly forty years. She has been equally devoted to traditional Appalachian music and to social causes. In Si Kahn's one-woman play *Precious Memories*, she portrays Sarah Ogan Gunning in her Detroit apartment following the death of her half-sister Aunt Molly Jackson. The performance is described as part memory play, part eulogy, and part concert. The same can be said of this album, which contains eleven of Gunning's songs, plus five bonus tracks composed by Jim Garland and Aunt Molly Jackson.

Sarah Garland was born in Knox County, Kentucky, in 1910. She and her brother, Jim Garland, and her older half-sister Mary Magdalene Garland—known later as Aunt Molly Jackson—grew up with the traditional ballads of Appalachia. At the age of fifteen, Sarah married coal miner Andrew Ogan. When the Great Depression hit the coalfields, life in the coalfields became even more difficult. As the United Mine Workers pulled back their organizing efforts, many miners turned to the Communist-led National Miners Union. The coal companies responded with violence, and many miners were driven out of the coalfields. Folklorist Mary Barnicle helped the Ogans and the Gunnings move to New York in 1935, where they met the principal figures in the New York folk music scene, including Pete Seeger, Woody Guthrie, Huddie Ledbetter, Burl Ives, and Earl Robinson. Alan Lomax, then a folklorist with the Library of Congress, recorded a dozen of Sarah's songs, and Mary Barnicle, then a professor of folklore and English at New York University, recorded several of her duets with her brother Jim Garland.

Andrew Ogan developed tuberculosis and died in 1938. Sarah married Joseph Gunning in 1941, and after World War II, they moved to Detroit. Thanks to scholars such as Archie Green, Ellen Stekert and Oscar Paskal, and performers such as Peggy Seeger and Barbara Dane, strident songs such as "Down on the Picket Line," "Dreadful Memories," Come All You Coal Miners," and "I Hate the Capitalist System" were preserved on record.

With musical assistance from Alice Gerrard, Si Kahn, Dan Hood, and Ron Brendle, Massek has created a portal through which a new generation of listeners can discover this music, and through the music gain an insight into Appalachia's radical history.❖

Joel Rafael
Baladista
Inside Recordings

Joel Rafael's latest release, on Jackson Browne's Inside Recordings label, is the ninth from this Woody Guthrie disciple. Two of his earlier releases were based on Guthrie songs: He wrote the score for a radio play based on John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, and he spent five years working with the Woody Guthrie Festival. But Rafael didn't ride the freight cars in search of fruit picking jobs like many of Guthrie's or Steinbeck's subjects; he grew up in southern California, playing jazz at the age of twelve, then switching to surf music, and finally getting caught up in the folk music revival in the early 1960s.

Rafael enrolled in college to avoid the Vietnam draft, playing coffeehouses in his spare time. When he lost his student deferment by dropping out of college, he didn't go to Canada—he simply slipped off the official radar, living in remote parts of the West Coast. When the draft ended, he was able to perform again, and befriended Eagles songwriter Jack Tempchin, a frequent collaborator. Rafael partnered for a while with Rosie Flores, then formed the Joel Rafael Band. After that band broke up, he began his Guthrie- and Steinbeck-related work. He continued to work with Guthrie's material, in studio and in performance, through the celebrations

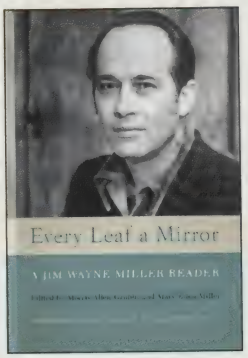
and festivals surrounding the 2012 centennial of Guthrie's birth.

On *Baladista,* Rafael employs his weathered voice to good effect. He is tastefully accompanied by Greg Leisz on electric guitar, dobro, and pedal steel and James "Hutch" Hutchinson on bass. Although most of the songs are original, the ghost of Woody Guthrie is evident. "Sticks and Stones" is about singing a Woody Guthrie song in Guthrie's hometown of Okemah, Oklahoma. Guthrie's song was about a lynching in Okemah. "El Bracero" echoes Guthrie's "Deportees," documenting the America's hypocritical immigration policies and citing the number of migrant farm workers killed in transportation accidents.

The other songs on *Baladista* are not directly connected to Woody Guthrie, but Rafael's artistic sensibility has been so informed by Guthrie's work that comparisons are inevitable. Joel Rafael may be forever branded as one of "Woody's kids"—but one gets the feeling he won't mind a bit. ❖

Wayne Winkler is director of WETS-FM/HD in Johnson City, Tennessee.

BOOK REVIEWS



Every Leaf a Mirror: A Jim Wayne Miller Reader
Morris Allen Grubbs and Mary Ellen Miller, Eds
University Press of Kentucky, 2014
234 pages

Everyone who is connected to the Appalachian region in any way must read *Every Leaf a Mirror: A Jim Wayne Miller Reader*, the new compilation of the best work of one of the region's most important writers, teachers, and scholars.

Had cancer not taken him far too soon, Jim Wayne Miller would have lived to see one of his dreams realized: a region spilling over with published writers, presses and periodicals, undergraduate and graduate programs in Appalachian Studies, and a large and growing body of scholarship about all aspects of the region's history, culture, and arts. Also, as this volume so poignantly reminds us, the reach and reputation of his own work would have grown as well.

Edited by Morris Allen Grubbs and Miller's widow, Western Kentucky University professor Mary Ellen Miller, the volume includes a broad sampling of Miller's published poetry, fiction, and nonfiction, as well as some previously unpublished work and a lengthy interview with another of Appalachia's important figures, Loyal Jones. There are essays by two of the region's finest writers, Robert Morgan and Silas House, sharing both their very thoughtful analysis of Miller's work and its value, and a personal account of his impact on their own lives and writing.

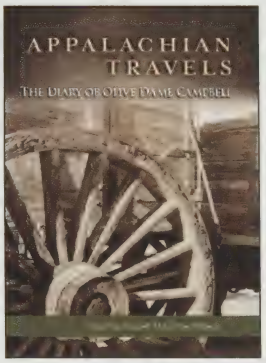
It would be difficult, if not impossible, to name a twentieth century American writer who had a more profound impact on a whole generation of younger writers. Kentucky Poet Laureate George Ella Lyon has called Miller "a kind of circuit rider," traveling around the mountains mentoring and promoting others writers, and in one of his most famous poems, "Brier Sermon," he certainly sounds like one. The Brier, a persona Miller created to depict a generation of mountain people who grew up in a culture that the outside world not only failed to understand but also failed to respect. The Brier urges us all to be "born again," and explains that to be our best selves we are to "[go back] to what you were before/without losing what you've since become."

The University Press of Kentucky has done the region a great service by putting this important volume together, ensuring that a seminal figure in twentieth-century American literature and in the Appalachian region is remembered and studied. He did not live to see the fruits of all his labors, but as his poem "Harvest" foretells, Miller would be pleased to see that his life's work and passion carries on:

So he wasn't sad to see his life gathered
Up in books, kept on a shelf like dry seeds
In an envelope, or carried far off
Like Spanish needles in a fox's fur.
His people brought the sale sea in their songs;
Now they moved mountains to the cities
And made all love and death and sorrow sweet there.

Heaviness was always left behind
To perish, to topple like a stone chimney.
But what was lightest lasted, lived in
song.❖

Rita Quillen's novel *Hiding Ezra*, was published in March 2014 by Little Creek Books.



Appalachian Travels: The Diary of Olive Dame Campbell
Elizabeth McCutchen Williams, Ed
University Press of Kentucky
294 pages

Appalachian Travels: The Diary of Olive Dame Campbell makes widely available for the first time important firsthand descriptions of early twentieth-century Appalachian Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, and Tennessee as seen through the eyes of a Progressive Era social reformer.

Olive Dame Campbell is best known as a preserver and perpetuator of Appalachian ballads and crafts: She famously sought out and published ballads with English folk song collector Cecil Sharp and established the John C. Campbell Folk School in 1925. But Massachusetts-born Campbell, together with her husband John, also was an example of the social reformers who travelled to the southern mountains during the Progressive Era—interested in improving educational, health, and social conditions there. The Campbells, on a grant from the Russell Sage Foundation, travelled around the southern highlands from late 1908 until early 1909, gathering information on the various mountain "uplift" agencies. Their findings eventually led to the establishment of the Southern Highland Division of the Foundation in 1913.

In *Appalachian Travels*, editor Elizabeth McCutchen Williams has transcribed the fragile, original, handwritten copy of Campbell's diary from the trip (located in UNC's Southern Historical Collection). With the book's introduction, excerpts from Campbell's 1919 biography of her husband, and footnotes, Williams has put Campbell's observations into the larger context of the Progressive social "uplift" efforts in Appalachia during the early twentieth century. She provides readers with a framework in which to understand the Campbells' trip and reflections by briefly discussing the different sorts of "outsiders" who travelled to the region during that time: the timber and coal interests who saw in Appalachia (in Ronald D. Eller's words) a "new frontier for expanding industrial capitalism," the local color writers who peppered their literature with many of the images we associate the mountains with today, and the northern reformers who were driven to help correct the perceived social ills in that frontier through the creation of missionary, settlement, and industrial schools.

The diary is made up of Olive Dame Campbell's observations on everything from health conditions in the mountains (typhoid and tuberculosis were rampant in many of the communities she and her husband visited), to Virginians' attitudes toward the Civil War, to her interactions with unfamiliar (to her) Baptists, to her perception that mountaineers saw their wives as "simply drudges and servants of men's desires."

The reader visits many of the well-known reform agencies of the day, including Berea College, Allanstand Industries, and Hindman Settlement School, and hears about the tension between church-based

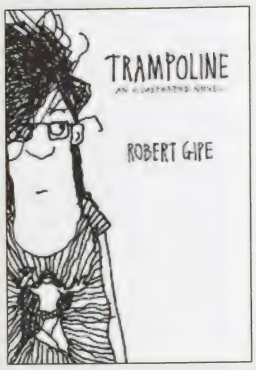
versus public education. Readers are treated to Campbell's introduction to the mountain music and crafts that would later prove so important to her: "Shall I ever forget it? The blazing fire, the young girl on her low stool before it, the soft strange strumming of the banjo—different from anything I had heard before."

Importantly, Campbell also paints a vivid picture of the physical landscape of Appalachia during that time period—often beautiful but sometimes white-knuckle-terrifying as she describes the sheer difficulty of getting from one place to another by wagon and horseback in thickly forested mountains without roads or streetlights, frequently in harsh weather.

Appalachian Travels is a fascinating read for anyone interested in just about any aspect of Appalachian history of the early twentieth century or, more specifically, in the history of social justice movements in Appalachia. One can read the diary and reflect on how the reform work of the "fotched-on" women from "off" gave way to the grassroots activism of women from the mountains, such as Maria Gunnoe and Judy Bonds. However, it is important to remember that Campbell's observations are just that—glimpses of a time and place seen through the lens of a northern, urban, Progressive Era thinker. The diary is not without its reinforcements of common stereotypes about the mountains, and Campbell presents a region where many communities were ravaged by disease, poor sanitation, incest, breakdown of family structure, "loose morals," resistance to education, and more family feuds than one can shake a stick at. Because of this, the diary, even with Williams' annotations, should not be read as a stand-alone portrayal of the region.

It does, however, provide a valuable addition to Appalachian Studies when examined in conjunction with more in-depth accounts of the economic context of the time, which contributed to many of the conditions observed by Campbell—the growth of the timber and coal industries and the resultant loss of agriculture and traditional social systems. ❖

Leila Weinstein is the education and outreach coordinator at the Blowing Rock Art and History Museum in Blowing Rock, NC.



Trampoline
Robert Gipe
Ohio University Press, 2015
315 pages

Robert Gipe, who heads the Appalachian Studies Program at Southeast Kentucky Community College, first came to the attention of many as a T-shirt artist, creating stylistic portrayals of regional heroes at the Appalachian Studies Conference and other venues. More recently he has become known as the hilarious and cogent introducer of the presenters at the Appalachian Writers Workshop at Hindman Settlement School. His most significant work over the last few years has been as the main man behind the series of plays called *Higher Ground* that involve masses of local people from Harlan County telling their own stories. Gipe's first book, *Trampoline*, allows his protagonist, fifteen-year-old Dawn, to tell her own story in a way that comes to the reader almost like a play.

The most unique aspect of this novel is that on practically every page is an illustration by Gipe, almost all depicting Dawn and including a few words of dialogue not repeated in the text. In his interview for *Revolution John* with David Joy, Robert Gipe explains, "Having Dawn speak through the book in cartoons was a way to scratch my graphic itch and remind

the reader that the narrator is, for the most part, speaking, not writing."

The novel takes place in the Eastern Kentucky coalfields between Thanksgiving and Christmas in 1998. Gipes's language helps set the stage: "My ears [filled] with the pinging of the cooling four-wheeler engines" and "some pretty color you couldn't get at Walmart." Darnell Arnoult calls the book, "geographically anchored, yet universally relevant." Nevertheless, it goes too far at times, for example when Dawn's five-year-old cousin "laid the palm of his hand wide open on the blade. Some stoned woman came walking over . . . kicked the knife off the porch and started beating the little boy. Blood flew everywhere." But this novel mostly balances meanness with redemption. Dawn's mother Tricia is tricked by her late husband's brother, Hubert, into thinking she has won a prize and will be given free plants by a store in town. When she arrives to claim her windfall, the clerk denies her, but a disgruntled employee surreptitiously gives her a bunch of plants anyway, and then Hubert helps her plant them.

In his interview with David Joy, Robert Gipe explains this book's contrast on a larger level. "With Dawn, I was interested in putting a character between two facts of life in the coalfields: A lot of people fall into substance abuse, and there are a lot of people willing to fight for justice. . . . So Dawn is inspired by her grandmother's fight to save Blue Bear Mountain. . . . Then when her mom is having trouble dealing with her own pain . . . Dawn finds no peaceful, normal life there either." Yet Gipe manages to convey this contrast in a nuanced manner. As Dawn states, "Those coal miners . . . who had loved me through my tree-hugging ways, needed mountains and woods more than any of us. They loved it here, and they had to tear it up to stay. The full hardness of their lot came down on me." Although it does not ignore important issues facing the mountains, it avoids being overly didactic.

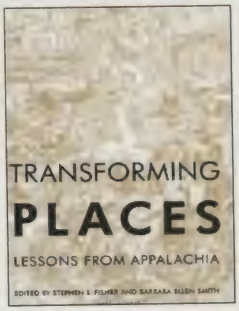
One aspect of the book that keeps readers enthralled is Gipe's style. Many of his similes are especially apt: "My stomach tightened like there was somebody standing on a tire iron screwing down the lug nuts of my guts." "Culbert's girlfriend's eyes were dull as social studies." "Mama's hair lifted in the breeze and waved like the streamers on the handlebars of a rich girl's bicycle." Only occasionally does he miss his mark. "[L]ike the lap of water against a pier in the summertime at a lake house" made me wonder how Dawn got to experience that.

Lisa Peet wrote of this book up for the *Library Journal*, "There are the books you like, and the books you love, and then there are the ones you want to hold to your heart for a minute after you turn the last page." *Trampoline* is a compelling and innovative novel that is fast becoming a cult classic.❖

George Brosi has worked for a variety of national and regional activist organizations. From 2002 until 2013 he served as editor of *Appalachian Heritage*.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

AMY TIPTON CORTNER



Transforming Places: Lessons from Appalachia
Stephen L. Fisher and Barbara Ellen Smith, Eds
University of Illinois Press, 2014
336 pages

The social justice issue of this magazine would not be complete without an examination of Fisher and Smith's important work on the current state of grassroots activism in Appalachia. Over twenty years ago, Fisher's *Fighting Back in Appalachia* (Temple, 1993) explored a very different world from the one organizers now face. Fresh from the successes of the Pittston strike, activists could hardly foresee a time in which the forces of Neoliberalism, Big Pharma, and out-of-control PACs would set neighbor against neighbor, splitting communities between "tree huggers" and Friends of Coal. Older, tried-and-true methods of organization and protest often prove inadequate in the struggle against these forces, necessitating the creation of new structures and methodologies to take their place. The battles in which these new, Internet driven, activist groups are tested are as diverse as the Appalachian ecosystem, a diversity reflected in the lively and engaging voices that Fisher and Smith have chosen to bring these battles

to life. The seventeen original essays showcased in *Transforming Places* chronicle and analyze these diverse struggles in an attempt to answer one driving question: "Who will control such places, and to what ends?"

The essays in the first section, "Go Tell It on the Mountains: Place, Identity, and Culture," tackle "some of the most common and significant dynamics associated with contemporary globalization" and "counter the widespread notion that organizing in Appalachia is either localized or occurs primarily in the coal fields." Honest about successes and failures alike, eager to share both strategies and cautionary tales, these authors set the tone for the chapters to come. Rees Shearers' "RAIL Solution: Taking on Halliburton on the Home Front" describes a citizens' group promoting a rail-based freight and passenger alternative, originally created to fight the privatization of I-81 in Virginia. Maureen Mullinax's "Resistance Through Community-Based Arts" explores the results of a grant project, spearheaded by Robert Gipe and his students in Harlan County, that has produced two plays dealing with the effects of the oxycodone epidemic.

The remaining sections, "Where No One Stands Alone: Bridging Divides" and "Climbing Jacob's Ladder: Scaling Up," respectively scrutinize the difficult work of "building alliances and coalitions across divergent identities and institutions" and offer lessons about "building relationships . . . informed by local particularities" even while reaching for broader visions.

In these essays the reader will meet immigrant workers, organizers from the Colombian coal fields, activists who crossed race and class lines to fight for women's issues, medical professionals combatting the devastations of the OxyContin plague, and members of the Mountain Justice movement, to name but a few.

Chapter 16, "Who Knows? Who Tells?" uses well-chosen short narratives to argue for a "knowledge commons" that incorporates local and experiential knowledge as well as the "expert" knowledge which often suppresses democratic debate. The authors detail the groundbreaking work of the anti-mountaintop removal (MTR) movement, which produced films, books, e-zines, celebrity interventions, YouTube and Internet sites such as iLoveMountains.org. The chapter concludes with action recommendations, including putting Appalachia's bioreserve in the same category as Amazonia, which "raises the potential for transnational knowledge and related environmental organizing that press toward visionary change."

In their cogent conclusion, Fisher and Smith emphasize that "Whether seeking to defend cherished places and ways of life or inventing new place-based meanings and futures—and the most successful campaigns do both—activists worldwide are mobilizing place-based symbols, metaphors, demands, and affinities as countervailing sources of resistance."

The places which concern the activist-authors of the essays in this book are "transforming" in two ways. While outside forces fueled by rabid neoliberalist policies are transforming much of Appalachia into a place horrifically unrecognizable, inside forces—joining hands with those facing similar horrors across the globe—are transforming resistance and protest into forces to be reckoned with. The mill might turn drop by drop, as the old song says, but anyone who wants to understand how the water of activism is flowing in Appalachia these days—and anyone who would like first person perspectives on how to and how not to build a better mill—could not find a better hand book than *Transforming Places*.❖

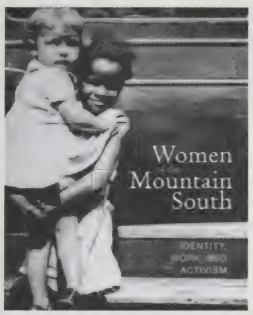
Many-Storied House
George Ella Lyon
University Press of Kentucky, 2013
121 pages

I am the one, who, thirty years ago, wanted to write a dissertation on The House as the Body in the Work of Four American Women Poets. I saw then, in the joists and plumbing of poems, this primal link.
"Postgraduate Work"

In *Many-Storied House*, Kentucky Poet Laureate George Ella Lyon engages the floor plan of her family's home, both literally and metaphorically, as a map to trace the sixty-eight year journey of her family's life there. After following "another path," she is "back in that thorny clearing," where memory binds plaster to lathe and she "can't tell the living from the ghosts" as their voices swirl and separate into these fine, spare poems.

In "Portrait," Lyon writes that "for its family / a house is mostly what you cannot see," and it is her gift to give form to this most intangible of tangiblities. Divided into sections—"Downstairs," "Flood,"

"Upstairs," "Yard," "All of It"—the poems move room by room through Lyon's life, leaping between far past and near past the way memory leaps, conjoined but not congruent. Poignant poems about her parents' deaths and the ensuing emptying of the house are balanced with wryly humorous poems such as "Bathroom," "Company," and "Interior Design." Lyon writes that "junk . . . slows down / traffic between this world / and the next" ("Junk Drawer"). Even so, these poems slow the nail-gun frantic construction of daily life to a pace more leisurely and manageable, more suited to hammer and hand saw than to electric drill.❖



Women of the Mountain South: Identity, Work, and Activism
Connie Park Rice and Marie Tedesco, Eds
Ohio University Press, 2015
504 pages

Anyone who has lived in Appalachia and who has paid attention should take as a given that, despite what those outside—and, unfortunately, sometimes inside—the region think, Appalachia isn't a churn of home-cranked vanilla ice cream with a few brown specks in it. While scholars have been laboring for decades to correct this misapprehension, for the most part their work in the field of gender studies has not been pulled together in an accessible, classroom-ready source. Rice and Tedesco's collection of essays, primary source material, and commentary redresses this problem by providing, as Rice puts it, a "broad overview of women across time and space" that is much needed and much welcomed.

The work is organized in three sections: "Identity," "Women and Work," and "Women and Activism." The essays in each section cover issues as varied as beauty pageants, mountaintop removal, prostitution, social justice, "benevolent women," and the origin of Mother's Day. An excellent overview of the material in each section is provided in the introduction for those who want to move quickly to a particular field of interest.

While remaining scholarly rigorous, the text offers a readable, often fascinating, testament to the truth that, as Rice puts it, "there is no 'Appalachian woman,' but there are many Appalachian women." *Women of the Mountain South* is a work that, by drawing on many disciplines, should appeal to a broad readership. For the general reader who is interested the "many Appalachian women," this is the work with which to begin.❖

Standing Our Ground: Women, Environmental Justice, and the Fight to End Mountain Top Removal
Joyce M. Barry
Ohio University Press, 2012
190 pages

Dedicated to Judy Bonds, a widely admired activist with the Coal River Mountain Watch who died in 2011, *Standing Our Ground* is described by its author as "an interdisciplinary cultural studies examination of the environmental justice movement against Mountain Top Removal." While that description accurately depicts the work's pedagogical bona fides, it does not take into account either the scope of the book or the powerful stories it brings to light.

Through the testimony of women like Bonds and Maria Gunnoe, both winners of the Goldman Environmental Prize, Barry covers issues such as the history of Big Coal and its cultural and political stranglehold on Appalachia; the gradual embrace of the environmental justice movement by mainstream environmental organizations; and life in a "sacrifice zone,"where human communities are considered disposable because of class, race, and poverty. Barry also addresses the need to reclaim the hillbilly stereotype; the global impact of the coal produced by MTR; and efforts on the part of these grassroots organizations to eliminate dependence on coal and

other fossil fuels altogether.

Balancing rigorous scholarship with compelling interviews, Barry has written an indispensable primer of the anti-MTR movement and the women who founded it and drive it forward. (Note: Chapter Three, "Remembering the Past, Working for the Future . . . Sustainable Communities and Environmental Heritage," was chosen for inclusion in *Women of the Mountain South*, also reviewed in this issue.)

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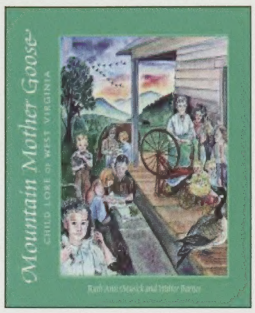


Mountain Mother Goose: Child Lore of West Virginia
Collected by Ruth Ann Musick and Walter Barnes
Judy Prozillo Byers, Ed
Patricia Ruth Musick, along with Noel W. Tenney and John Henry Randolph, Illus
Fairmont State University Press, 2013
354 pages

This charmingly illustrated book is the culmination of over fifty years of collecting and scholarship and thirty-five years of editing and preparing the material for print. If the work itself were a children's tale, it could be titled "The Story of the Three Scholars and the Lost-and-Found Lore." Despite misplacement, misfiling, and general mishap, the work that was passed from Barnes to Musick has managed to do more than survive in this lovingly rendered edition. The editor's invitation to "look into this book as a window into the world of childhood and as a mirror into your own deeper self" is extended to everyone from folklorists and professors of children's literature to storytellers, educators, and all those dedicated to "the Spirit of Childhood." The book should prove of particular interest to those who are seeking information about the oral traditions of American children in the decades between 1920 and 1970. Games of all types, riddles, jump rope rhymes—even "autographs and epitaphs"—can be found in these chapters. The once topical nature of some of the lore (rhymes about Hitler and Blondie and Dagwood, for instance) may or may not come as a surprise, but voices from years past speak here. This is a book of many voices, no longer stilled by the dust of archives.❖

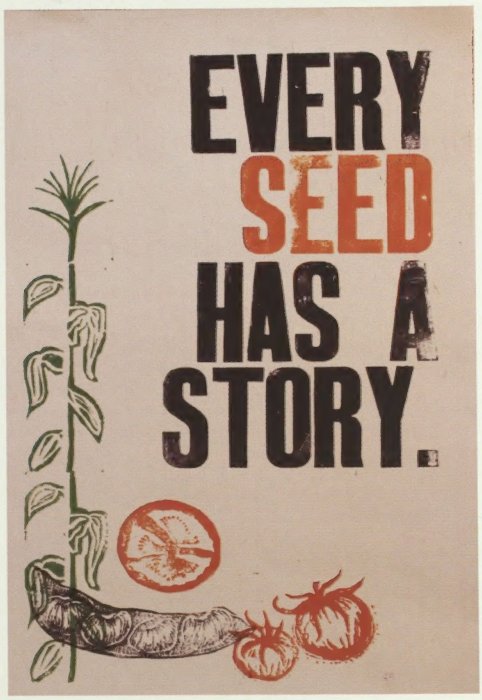
Amy Tipton Cortner recently retired from Caldwell Community College in Hudson, North Carolina, where she was an instructor of English and humanities. She is the author of two chapbooks, a novel, and many essays.

Appraisal Report: Atom City

Sara Sams

What it's worth depends on who you ask. What it's worth depends on who asks. Do you take into account the dogwoods, the squid-ink blue of storm just formed behind the ridge; do you take into account the mud sucked and slung to raise temporary housing, the enemy dead, the length of lines for cigarettes, and so forth. How do you calculate such patient waiting and other acts of patriotism. Do you file the picture of the schoolgirl, 1995, hair-on-end, cheesing for the camera? But then what do you do with a photo once it's been filed? Do you refer to it here, in this report? You might. But then you'd have to refer to the lot of them—and there's a whole lot more; this is an entire city, after all, containing multitudes of molecules and wise-cracked smiles. The city's pride itself sits in the center of town, adjacent to the derelict hotel, the one that stands like a Shining on the hill. Start there: It measures 20 x 10 x 20—quite large in scale if you consider the unit of measurement, but is it stable, will it hold? That's the question. And if you want to know its real worth, you'll have to look out back. You must look out back. Is there a privy? If so, no indoor plumbing at all, and that's a problem. Big enough and standing, that's one thing, but sooner or later someone's going to have to take a shit. A definite. And how will you assess the sewage piling up? What's the standard of value of a smell? Is it balanced by the charcoal drift, the damp green scent pressed on you by the fog? What about the pungent urine samples in small, unlabeled vials? Other items are even less discrete, but nonetheless important: How about *location*, do you rate the mountain views, the distance from Japan? Do you take into account the Friendship Bell? Stand inside it while it's rung. How do you feel? How's your head? Are any of these conditions actually better than "fair"?

Sara Sams is a poet and translator from Oak Ridge, Tennessee, who now lives in Phoenix and teaches at Arizona State University.



Local Art for Local Food

As part of the Appalachian Teaching Project, funded by the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), students at the University of North Georgia explored ways to support local food advocates in Lumpkin County, especially the Downtown Dahlonega Farmers Market. After interviewing all the stakeholders, students organized heirloom seed swaps, seed-saving demonstrations, and food-related art exhibits. Students also created a series of broadsides on an antique letterpress, including the one shown above, which was created by Chelsea Godfrey, Hannah Gioiosa, and Toby Westberry.

Coming in 2016: Cultivating Appalachia

"Cultivating Appalachia,"is the next *Now &Then* theme. Seeds, planting, and other farming/ gardening images spring to mind. However, "cultivating" also means improving by labor, care, study (think cultivate the mind), and nurturing (as in cultivate the arts).

Accepting submissions beginning January 4
Closing submissions on February 29

Photo by Edward Schell.

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Food scholar-activist Veronica Limeberry, seated third from left, with participants in the "A-Z Agroecology" course offered through Dr. Vandana Shiva's Earth University at the Navdanya Conservation Farm in India. See story on page 47. Photo courtesy of Veronica Limeberry.